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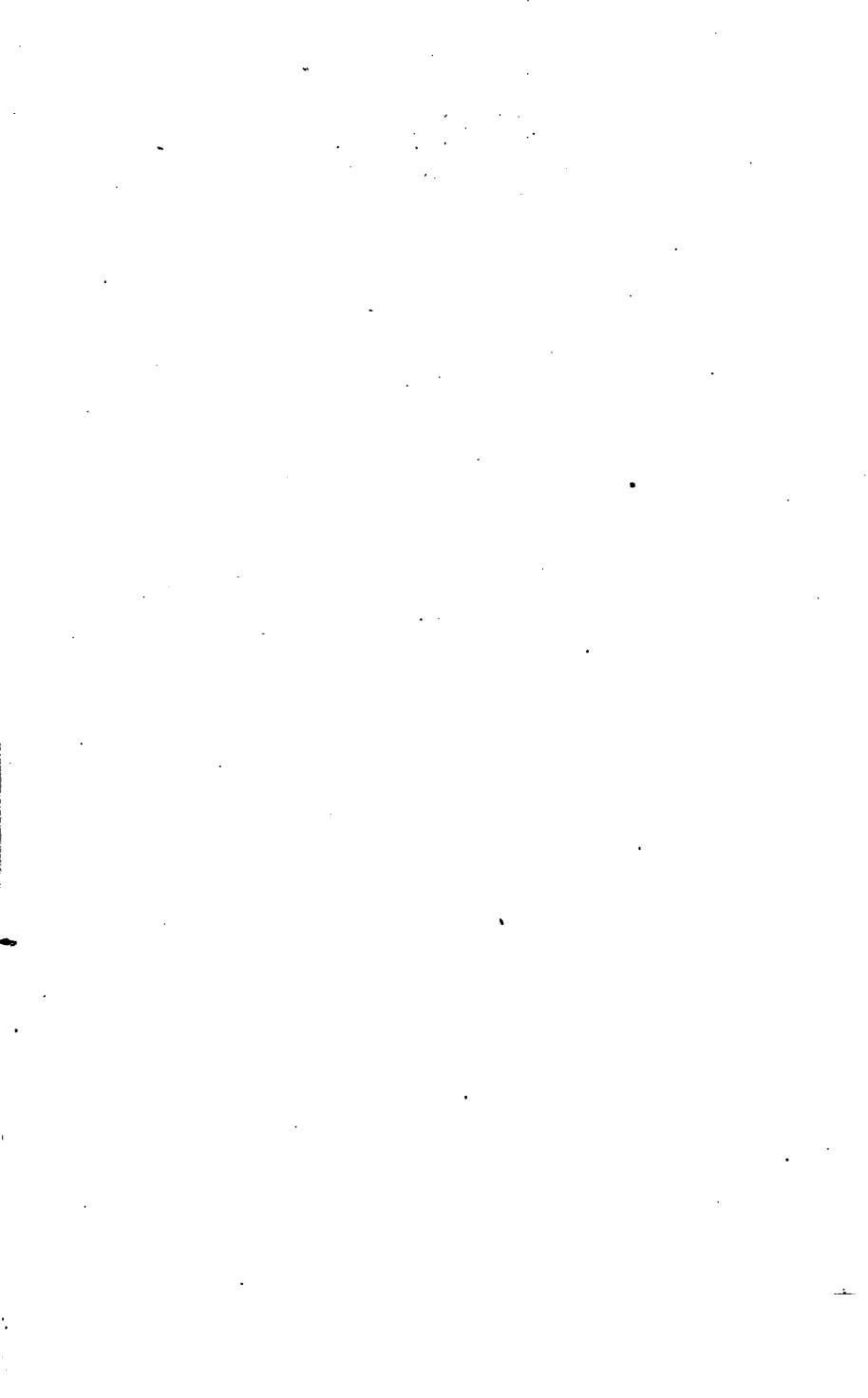
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Joseph Crocker

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THE
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

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THE
ORLANDO FURIOSO

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE

FROM THE ITALIAN OF

LUDOVICO ARIOSTO

WITH NOTES

BY

WILLIAM STEWART ROSE

VOL. VII.

LONDON
JOHN MURRAY ALBEMARLE-STREET
MDCCCXXIX



ERRATA.

Page 128, stanza cxi., line 6, *for* beak, *read* snout.

153, at the end of stanza lxxx. *dele comma*.

234, stanza lxxxviii., line 6, *for*

Reno and Felsina shall hear his song,

read

And Reno and Felsina hear his song.

247, line 4, after rank *dele comma*.

THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO XXXVII.

VOL. VII.

B

ARGUMENT.

*Lament and outcry loud of some that mourn,
Attract Rogero and the damsels two.
They find Ulania, with her mantle shorn
By Marganor, amid her moaning crew.
Upon that felon knight, for his foul scorn,
A fierce revenge Marphisa takes: a new
Statute that maid does in the town ordain,
And Marganor is by Ulania slain.*

THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO XXXVII.

I.

IF, as in seeking other gift to gain,
(For Nature, without study, yieldeth nought)
With mighty diligence, and mickle pain,
Illustrious women day and night have wrought;
And if with good success the female train
To a fair end no homely task have brought,
So—did they for such other studies wake—
As mortal attributes immortal make;

II.

And, if they of themselves sufficient were
Their praises to posterity to show,
Nor borrowed authors' aid, whose bosoms are
With envy and with hate corroded so,
That oft they hide the good they might declare,
And tell in every place what ill they know,
To such a pitch would mount the female name,
As haply ne'er was reached by manly fame.

III.

To furnish mutual aid is not enow,
For many who would lend each other light.
Men do their best, that womankind should show
Whatever faults they have in open sight;
Would hinder them of rising from below,
And sink them to the bottom, if they might:
I say the ancients; as if glory, won
By woman, dimmed their own, as mist the sun.

IV.

But hand or tongue ne'er had, nor has, the skill,
Does voice or lettered page the thought impart,
Though each, with all its power, increase the ill,
Diminishing the good with all its art,
So female fame to stifle, but that still
The honour of the sex survives in part:
Yet reacheth not its pitch, nor such its flight,
But that 'tis far below its natural height.

V.

Not only Thomyris and Harpalice,
And who brought Hector, who brought Turnus aid,
And who, to build in Lybia crost the sea,
By Tyrian and Sidonian band obeyed;
Not only famed Zenobia, only she
Who Persian, Indian, and Assyrian frayed;
Not only these and some few others merit
Their glory, that eternal fame inherit:

VI.

Faithful, chaste, wise, and bold, the world hath seen
In Greece and Rome not only, but where'er
The Sun unfolds his flowing locks, between
The Hesperides and Indian hemisphere;
Whose gifts and praise have so extinguished been,
We scarce of one amid a thousand hear;
And this; because they in their days have had
For chroniclers, men envious, false, and bad.

VII.

But ye that prosper in the exercise
Of goodly labours, aye your way pursue;
Nor halt, O women, in your high emprise,
For fear of not receiving honour due:
For, as nought good endures beneath the skies,
So ill endures no more; if hitherto
Unfriended by the poet's pen and page,
They now befriend you in our better age.

VIII.

Erewhile Marullo¹ and Pontane for you
Declared, and—sire and son—the Strozzi twain;
Capello, Bembo, and that writer, who
Has fashioned like himself the courtier train;
With Lewis Alamanni, and those two,
Beloved of Mars and Muses, of their strain
Descended, who the mighty city rule,
Which Mincius parts, and moats with marshy pool².

IX.

One of this pair (besides that, of his will,
He honours you, and does you courtesies ;
And makes Parnassus and high Cynthus' hill
Resound your praise, and lift it to the skies)
The love, the faith, and mind, unconquered still,
Mid threats of ruin, which in stedfast wise
To him his constant Isabel hath shown^s,
Render yet more your champion than his own.

X.

So that he never more will wearied be
With quickening in his verse your high renown ;
And, if another censures you, than he
Prompter to arm in your defence is none ;
Nor knight, in this wide world, more willingly
Life in the cause of virtue would lay down :
Matter as well for other's pen he gives,
As in his own another's glory lives ;

XI.

And well he merits, that a dame so blest,
(Blest with all worth, which in this earthly round
Is seen in them who don the female vest,)
To him hath evermore been faithful found ;
Of a sure pillar of pure truth possess
In her, despising Fortune's every wound.
Worthy of one another are the twain ;
Nor better ere were paired in wedlock's chain.

XII.

New trophies he on Oglio's bank has shown⁴;
For he, mid bark and car, amid the gleam
Of fire and sword, such goodly rhymes hath strown,
As may with envy swell the neighbouring stream.
By Hercules Bentivoglio next is blown
The noble strain, your honour's noble theme;
Reynet Trivulzio and Guidecco mine,
And Molza, called of Phœbus and the Nine.

XIII.

There's Hercules of the Carnuti⁵, son
Of my own duke, who spreads his every plume
Soaring and singing, like harmonious swan,
And even to heaven uplifts your name; with whom
There is my lord of Guasto, not alone
A theme for many an Athens, many a Rome;
In his high strain he promises as well,
Your praise to all posterity to tell.

XIV.

And beside these and others of our day,
Who gave you once, or give you now renown,
This for yourselves ye may yourselves purvey:
For many, laying silk and sampler down,
With the melodious Muses, to allay
Their thirst at Aganippe's well, have gone,
And still are going; who so fairly speed,
That we more theirs than they our labour need.

XV.

If I of these would separately tell,
And render good account and honour due,
More than one page I with their praise should swell,
Nor ought beside would this day's canto shew;
And if on five or six alone I dwell,
I may offend and anger all the crew.
What then shall I resolve? to pass all by?
Or choose but one from such a company?

XVI.

One will I choose, and such will choose, that she
All envy shall so well have overthrown,
No other woman can offended be,
If, passing others, her I praise alone:
Nor joys this one but immortality,
Through her sweet style (and better know I none);
But who is honoured in her speech and page,
Shall burst the tomb, and live through every age.

XVII.

As Phœbus to his silvery sister shows
His visage more, and lends her brighter fires,
Than Venus, Maja, or to star that glows
Alone, or circles with the heavenly quires;
So he with sweeter eloquence than flows
From other lips, that gentle dame inspires;
And gives her words such force, a second sun
Seems in our days its glorious course to run.

XVIII.

Mid victories born, Victoria is her name^o,
Well named; and whom (does she advance or stay)
Triumphs and trophies evermore proclaim,
While Victory heads or follows her array.
Another Artemisia is the dame,
Renowned for love of her Mausolus, yea
By so much greater, as it is more brave
To raise the dead, than lay them in the grave.

XIX.

If chaste Laodamia, Portia true,
Evadne, Argia, Arria⁷, and many more
Merited praise, because that glorious crew
Coveted burial with their lords of yore,
How much more fame is to Victoria due?
That from dull Lethe, and the river's shore,
Which nine times hems the ghosts, to upper light
Has dragged her lord, in death and fate's despite.

XX.

If that loud-voiced Mæonian trump whilere
The Macedonian grudged Achilles, how,
Francis Pescara, O unconquered peer,
Would he begrudge thee, were he living now,
That wife, so virtuous and to thee so dear,
Thy well-earned glory through the world should blow;
And that thy name through her should so rebound,
Thou needst not crave a clearer trumpet's sound!

XXI.

If all that is to tell, and all I fain
Would of that lady tell, I wished to unfold,
Though long, yet not so long, would be the strain,
But that large portion would be left untold,
While at a stand the story would remain
Of fierce Marphisa and her comrades bold;
To follow whom I promised erst, if you
Would but return to hear my song anew.

XXII.

Now, being here to listen to my say,
Because I would not break my promise, I
Until my better leisure, will delay
Her every praise at length to certify.
Not that I think she needs my humble lay,
Who with such treasure can herself supply:
But simply to appay my single end,
That gentle dame to honour and commend.

XXIII.

Ladies, in fine I say, that every age
Worthy of story, many a dame supplies;
But that, through jealous authors' envious rage,
Unchronicled by fame, each matron dies;
But will no more; since in the historic page
Your virtues ye, yourselves, immortalize.
Had those two damsels in this art been read,
Their every warlike deed had wider spread.

XXIV.

Bradamant and Marphisa would, I say,
Whose bold, victorious deeds, in battle done,
I strive to bring into the light of day;
But nine in ten remain to me unknown.
I what I know right willingly display;
As well, that all fair actions should be shown,
As well that, gentle ladies, I am bent
Ye whom I love and honour, to content.

XXV.

As said, in act to go Rogero stood;
And, having taken leave, the cavalier
Withdraws his trenchant faulchion from the wood,
Which holds no more the weapon, as whilere.
When, sounding loud amid that solitude,
A cry, not distant far, arrests the peer.
Then thitherward he with those damsels made,
Prompt, if 'twere needed, to bestow his aid.

XXVI.

They rode an-end; and louder waxed the sound,
And plainer were the plaintive words they heard:
When in a valley they three women found
Making that plaint, who in strange garb appeared:
For to the navel were those three ungowned,
—Their coats by some uncourteous varlet sheared—
And knowing not how better to disguise
Their shame, they sate on earth, and dared not rise.

XXVII.

As Vulcan's son^s, that sprang (as it is versed)
Out of the dust, without a mother made,
Whom—so Minerva bade—Aglauros nursed
With sovereign care, too bold and curious maid,
Seated in car, by him constructed first
To hide his hideous feet, was erst conveyed;
So that which never is to sight revealed,
Sitting, those mournful damsels kept concealed.

XXVIII.

At that dishonest sight and shameful, glows
Each martial damsel's visage, overspread
With the rich dyes of Pæstum's crimson rose,
When vernal airs their gentle influence shed.
Bradamant marked them; and that one of those
Was Ulany, the damsel quickly read;
Ulany, that was sent with solemn train
From the LOST ISLE to royal Charlemagne;

XXIX.

And recognised the other two no less;
For them she saw, when she saw Ulany;
But now to her directed her address,
As the most honoured of those ladies three,
Demanding, who so full of wickedness,
So lawless was and so unmannerly,
That he those secrets to the sight revealed,
Which Nature, as she could, 'twould seem, concealed.

XXX.

Ulany, that in Bradamant descried,
—Known both by voice and ensignry—the maid,
Who some few days before those knights of pride
With her victorious lance on earth had laid,
‘How, in a town not far remote’—replied—
‘An evil race, by pity never swayed,
‘Besides that they their raiment thus had shorn,
‘Had beat them, and had done them other scorn.

XXXI.

‘What of the shield became,’ she cannot say,
‘Nor knows she those three monarchs’ destiny,
‘Who guided her so long upon her way;
‘If killed, or led into captivity;’
And says, ‘that she herself has ta’en her way,
‘Albeit to fare a-foot sore irksome be,
‘To appeal to royal Charlemagne, assured
‘By him such outrage will not be endured.’

XXXII.

To hear, yet more to see, so foul a wrong,
Disturbed the Child and damsels’ placid air
And beauteous visage, whose bold hearts and strong
No less compassionate than valiant were.
They now, all else forgetting, ere the tongue
Of Ulany prefers demand, or prayer,
That they would venge them on their cruel foe,
In haste towards the felon’s castle go.

XXXIII.

With one consent, the maids and cavalier,
By their great goodness moved, from plate and mail
Had stript their upper vests, well fitting gear
Those miserable ladies' shame to veil.
Bradamant suffers not, that, as whilere,
Sad Ulany shall tramp by hill and dale;
But seats her on her horse's croup; so do
Her comrades by those other damsels two.

XXXIV.

To gentle Bradamant Ulania showed
The nearest way to reach the castled height;
While comfort Bradamant on her bestowed,
Promising vengeance for that foul despote.
They leave the vale, and by a crooked road
And long ascend, now wheeling left, now right:
Nor till the sun is hidden in the sea,
Upon their weary way repose the three.

XXXV.

They to a hamlet on the summit wound,
Scaling the mountain's steep and rugged side;
And such good shelter and good supper found,
As could by such rude quarters be supplied.
Arriving there, they turned their eyes around,
And full of women every place espied,
Some old, some young; nor, mid so large a clan,
Appeared the visage of a single man.

XXXVI.

Not more bold Jason wondered⁹, and the train
Which sailed with him, that Argonautic crew,
Seeing those dames that had their husbands slain,
Fathers and sons and brethren,—so that through
All Lemnos' pleasant isle, by hill or plain,
Of manly visage they beheld not two—
Than here Rogero, and the rest who go
With good Rogero, wonder at this show.

XXXVII.

The martial damsels bid for Ulany,
And those who came with her, provide attire;
And gowns that eve are furnished for the three,
If meaner than their own, at least entire.
To him a woman of that villagery
Valiant Rogero summons, to inquire
Where are the men; in that he none descries;
And thus to him that village wife replies:

XXXVIII.

“What haply is to you a wonderment,
“This crowd of womankind, where man is none,
“To us is grave and grievous punishment,
“Who, banished here, live wofully alone;
“And, that such exile us may more torment,
“From those so loved, as brother, father, son,
“A long divorce and cruel we sustain,
“As our fell tyrant pleases to ordain.

XXXIX.

- “ Sent to these confines from his land, which lies
“ But two leagues distant thence, where we were born,
“ Us in this place the fell barbarian sties,
“ Having first done us many a brutal scorn;
“ And has with death and all extremities
“ Threatened our kinsmen and ourselves forlorn,
“ If they come hither, or he hears report
“ We harbour them, when hither they resort.

XL.

- “ He to our name is such a deadly foe,
“ He will not have us nearer than I shewed,
“ Nor have us of our kin approached, as though
“ Infection from the female sex ensued.
“ Already have the greenwood trees laid low
“ Their leafy honours twice, and twice renewed,
“ Since our lord’s fury to such pitch arose,
“ Nor is there one his phrensy to oppose.

XLI.

- “ For he has spread such passing fear among
“ The people, death can cause no worse affright;
“ In that, beside his natural love of wrong,
“ He is endowed with more than human might.
“ He than a hundred other men more strong,
“ In body is of a gigantic height:
“ Nor us his vassals he molests alone;
“ But worse by him to stranger dame is done.

XLII.

“ If your own honour, sir, and of those three,
“ Beneath your charge, to you in aught is dear,
“ ’Twill safer, usefuller, and better be
“ To leave this road, and by another steer.
“ This leads you to *his* tower, described by me,
“ To prove the savage use that cruel peer
“ Has there established, to the shame and woe
“ Of dame or cavalier, who thither go.

XLIII.

“ This castellain or tyrant, Marganor
“ (So name the felon knight) than whom more fell
“ Nero was not, nor other heretofore,
“ If other be, whose actions Fame doth swell,
“ Thirsts for man’s blood, but thirsts for woman’s more
“ Than wolf for blood of lambs; and bids expel
“ With shame all females, that, in evil hour,
“ Their fortune has conducted to his tower.”

XLIV.

‘ How in that impious man such fury grew,’
Asked young Rogero and those damsels twain,
And prayed, ‘ she would in courtesy pursue,
‘ Yea, rather from the first her tale explain.’
“ That castle’s lord (the woman said anew),
“ Was always cruel, fierce, and inhumane,
“ Yet for a while his wicked heart concealed,
“ Nor what he was so suddenly revealed.

XLV.

- “ For in the lifetime of his sons, a pair
“ That differed much from the paternal style,
“ (Since they the stranger loved; and loathers were
“ Of cruelty and other actions vile)
“ Flourished the courtesies and good customs there,
“ And there were gentle deeds performed this while:
“ For, albeit avaricious was the sire,
“ He never crossed the youths in their desire.

XLVI.

- “ The cavaliers and dames who journeyed by
“ That castle, there so well were entertained,
“ That they departed, by the courtesy
“ Of those two kindly brothers wholly gained.
“ In the holy orders of fair chivalry¹⁰
“ Alike the youthful pair had been ordained.
“ Cylander one, Tanacro hight the other;
“ Bold, and of royal mien each martial brother;

XLVII.

- “ And truly were, and would have been alway
“ Worthy of every praise and fame, withal,
“ Had they not yielded up themselves a prey
“ To that uncurbed desire, which Love we call;
“ By which they were seduced from the right way
“ Into foul Error's crooked maze; and all
“ The good that by those brethren had been wrought,
“ Waxed, in a moment, rank, corrupt and naught.

XLVIII.

- " It chanced, that in their father's fortilage,
" A knight of the Greek emperor's court did lie;
" With him his lady was; of manners sage;
" Nor fairer could be craved by wishful eye:
" For her Cylander felt such amorous rage,
" He deemed, save he enjoyed her, he should die;
" He deemed that, when the lady should depart,
" His soul as well would from his body part:

XLIX.

- " And, for he knew 'twas useless to entreat,
" Devised to make her his by force of hand;
" Armed, and in silence, near his father's seat,
" Where must pass knight and lady, took his stand.
" Through natural daring and through amorous heat,
" He with too little thought the matter planned;
" So that, when he beheld the knight advance,
" He issued, to assail him, lance to lance.

L.

- " To overthrow him, at first shock he thought,
" And to win dame and palm in the career;
" But that Greek knight, in warlike strife well-taught,
" Shivered, like glass, his breastplate with the spear.
" The bitter tidings to the sire were brought,
" Who bade bear home the stripling on a bier:
" He, finding he was dead, loud mourning made,
" And him in earth, beside his fathers, layed.

LI.

- “ Yet harbourage and welcome as before
“ Had he who sought it; neither more nor less :
“ Because Tanacro in his courteous lore
“ Equalled his brother as in gentleness.
“ Thither that very year, from foreign shore,
“ A baron and his wife their steps address :
“ A marvel he of valour, and as fair
“ As could be said, is she, and debonnair.

LII.

- “ Nor fairer was the dame than chaste and right,
“ And well deserving every praise; the peer
“ Derived of generous stock, and bold in fight,
“ As ever champion, of whose fame we hear;
“ And 'tis well fitting, that such valiant wight
“ Should joy a thing so excellent and dear.
“ Olindro he, the lord of Lungavilla,
“ And she, his lady wife, yclept Drusilla.

LIII.

- “ No less for her the young Tanacro glows,
“ Than for that other burned Cylander sore;
“ Who brought erewhile to sad and bitter close
“ The wicked love he to that lady bore.
“ The holy, hospitable laws he chose
“ To violate no less than he, before
“ He would endure, that him, with venom'd sting,
“ His new desire to cruel death should bring.

LIV.

- “ But he, because he has before his eyes
“ The example of his elder brother slain,
“ Thinks to bear off the lady in such wise,
“ That bold Olindro cannot venge the stain.
“ Straight spent in him, not simply weakened, lies
“ The virtue, wont Tanacro to sustain
“ Above that flood of vice, in whose profound
“ And miry waters Manganor lay drowned.

LV.

- “ That night, he in deep silence bade array
“ A score of armed men; and next conveyed
“ Into some caverns, bordering on the way,
“ And distant from the tower, his ambuscade.
“ The roads were broken, and the following day
“ Olindro from all sides was overlaid;
“ And, though he made a brave defence and long,
“ Of wife and life was plundered by that throng.

LVI.

- “ Olindro slain¹¹, they led his lady fair
“ A captive thence, o'erwhelmed with sorrow so,
“ That she refused to live, and made her prayer,
“ Tanacro, as a grace, would death bestow:
“ Resolved to die, she leapt, in her despair,
“ From a high bank into a vale below;
“ But death was to the wretched dame refused;
“ Who lay with shattered head and sorely bruised.

LVII.

- “ She could not to the castle be conveyed
“ In other guise than borne upon a bier :
“ Her (so Tanacro bids) prompt leeches aid ;
“ Because he will not lose a prey so dear ;
“ And while to cure Drusilla they essayed,
“ Busied about their spousals was the peer :
“ In that so chaste a lady and so fair,
“ A wife’s and not a leman’s name should wear.

LVIII.

- “ He had no other thought, no other aim,
“ No other care, nor spake beside of ought ;
“ Saw he had wronged her, and took all the blame,
“ And, as he could, to amend his error wrought :
“ But all was vain ; the more he loved the dame,
“ The more he to appease her anger sought,
“ So much more was her hate ; so much more will,
“ So much more thirst had she that youth to kill.

LIX.

- “ Yet hatred blinded not her judgment so,
“ But what the dame could clearly comprehend,
“ That she, if she would strike the purposed blow,
“ Must feign, and secret snares for him extend.
“ And her desire beneath another show
“ (Which is but how Tanacro to offend)
“ Must mask ; and make him think, that overblown
“ Is her first love, and turned to him alone.

LX.

- “ Her face speaks peace; while vengeance inwardly
“ Her heart demands, and but to this attends:
“ She many things revolves, accepts, puts by;
“ Or, as of doubtful issue, some suspends.
“ Deeming she can, if she resolves to die,
“ Compass her scheme, with this resolve she ends;
“ And better how can she expend her breath
“ Than in avenging dear Olindro's death?

LXI.

- “ She showed herself all joyful, on her part,
“ And feigned that she desired those nuptials sore;
“ Nor only showed an unreluctant heart;
“ But all delay and hindrance overbore.
“ Painted and tired above the rest with art,
“ 'Twould seem, she of her husband thinks no more:
“ But 'tis her will, that in her country's wise
“ Tanacro shall their wedding solemnize.

LXII.

- “ The custom howsoever was not true,
“ Which as her country's use she certified;
“ But, because never thought within her grew
“ Which she could spend on any thing beside,
“ A falsehood she devised, whence hope she drew
“ Of killing him by whom her husband died;
“ And told Tanacro—and the manner said—
“ How in her country's fashion she would wed.

LXIII.

- ‘ The widow that a husband’s bed ascends,
‘ Ere she approach the bridegroom (said that fair),
‘ The spirit of the dead, whom she offends,
‘ Must soothe with solemn office, mass and prayer;
‘ In the holy temple making her amends,
‘ Where her first husband’s bones entombed are.
‘ —That sacrifice performed—to bind their vows
‘ The nuptial ring the bridegroom gives the spouse.

LXIV.

- ‘ But the holy priest, while this shall be about,
‘ Upon wine, thither for that purpose sped,
‘ His orisons, appropriate and devout,
‘ Blessing withal the liquor, shall have said;
‘ Then from the flask into a cup pour out,
‘ And give the blessed wine to them that wed.
‘ But ’tis the spouse’s part to take the cup;
‘ And first that vessel’s cordial beverage sup.’

LXV.

- “ The unsuspecting youth, who takes no heed
“ What nuptials, ordered in her wise, import,
“ At her own pleasure bids the dame proceed,
“ So that she cut his term of waiting short;
“ Nor does the miserable stripling read
“ She would avenge Olindro in that sort;
“ And on one object is so sore intent,
“ He sees but that, on that alone is bent.

LXVI.

“ An ancient woman, seized with her whilere,
“ And left, withal, obeyed Drusilla, who
“ That beldam called and whispered in her ear,
“ So as that none beside could hear the two—
‘ A poison of quick power for me prepare,
‘ Such as, I know, thou knowest how to brew;
‘ And bottle it; for I have found a way
‘ The traitorous son of Marganor to slay;

LXVII.

‘ And me and thee no less can save,’ (she said,)
‘ And this at better leisure will explain.’
“ The woman went her ways, the potion made,
“ And to the palace bent her steps again:
“ A flask of Candian sweet wine she purveyed,
“ Wherewith Drusilla sheathed that deadly bane;
“ And kept the beverage for the nuptial day;
“ For now had ceased all hindrance and delay.

LXVIII.

“ On the fixt day she seeks the temple, dight
“ With precious jewels and with goodly gear;
“ Where her lord’s tomb, befitting such a knight,
“ Built by her order, two fair pillars rear.
“ The holy office there, with solemn rite,
“ Is sung, which men and women troop to hear;
“ And—gay, beyond his usage—with his heir,
“ Begirt by friends, Sir Marganor is there.

LXIX.

- “ When the holy obsequies at last were o’er¹²,
“ And by the priest was blest the poisoned draught,
“ He into a fair golden cup did pour
“ The wine, as by Drusilla had been taught.
“ She drank what sorted with her sex ; nor more
“ Than would effect the purpose which she sought :
“ Then to the bridegroom, with a jocund eye,
“ Handed the draught, who drained the goblet dry.

LXX.

- “ The cup returned—Tanacro, blithe and gay,
“ Opened his arms Drusilla to embrace.
“ Then altered was her sweet and winning way,
“ And to a tempest that long calm gave place.
“ She thrust him back, she motioned him away ;
“ She seemed to kindle in her eyes and face ;
“ And to the youth, with broken voice and dread,
—‘ Traitor, stand off,’—the furious lady said ;—

LXXI.

- ‘ Shalt thou then joy and solace have from me,
‘ I tears from thee, and punishment and woe ?
‘ Now these mine hands shall make an end of thee.
‘ This, if thou know’st it not, for poison know.
‘ Much grieve I that thou should’st too honoured be
‘ By the executioner who deals the blow ;
‘ Should’st die a death too easy : since I wot,
‘ For thee too shameful hand or pain is not.

LXXII.

‘ In seeing this thy death, it gives me pain,
‘ My sacrifice should be completed ill ;
‘ For could I do by thee as I were fain,
‘ Nothing should lack that purpose to fulfill.
‘ May my sweet consort not the work disdain,
‘ And for the imperfect deed accept the will !
‘ That, without power to compass what I would,
‘ I have been fain to slay thee as I could !

LXXIII.

‘ And that deserved punishment, which I
‘ Cannot, as I desire, on thee bestow,
‘ I hope thy soul shall have ; hope to be nigh,
‘ To see thee suffer, in the realms of woe.’
“ Her turbid eyes then raising to the sky,
“ With joyous face all over in a glow,
“ (She cried) ‘ Olindro, take this victim’s life,
‘ With the good will of thine avenging wife ;

LXXIV.

‘ And of our lord for me the grace obtain,
‘ To be this day in paradise with thee.
‘ If he reply, none cometh to your reign,
‘ Without desert ; say such I bring with me,
‘ Who this fell impious monster, in his fane,
‘ Offer, as my first-fruits ; and what can be
‘ A greater merit than to have suppress
‘ Such loathsome and abominable pest ?’

LXXV.

- “ Her life, together with her speech, was spent ;
“ And, even dead, her face appeared to glow
“ With joy, at having dealt such punishment
“ To him, that laid her cherished husband low.
“ If fierce Tanacro’s spirit did prevent,
“ Or follow hers, I wiss not ; but, I trow,
“ Prevented, for on him that venom rank
“ Yet faster wrought, because he deeper drank.

LXXVI.

- “ Marganor, who beheld his only son
“ Fall and expire, his outstretched arms between,
“ Well nigh had with Tanacro died, o’erthrown
“ By that so sudden grief and unforeseen.
“ Two sons he had, and now was left alone :
“ Brought to that pass he by two wives had been ;
“ *This* was the cause one spent his vital breath
“ With her own hand, *that* dealt the other death.

LXXVII.

- “ Love, pity, sorrow, anger, and desire
“ Of death and vengeance, all together rend
“ And rack the childless and unhappy sire,
“ Who groans like sea, when wind and waves contend :
“ Towards the dame, with vengeful thoughts afire,
“ He goes, but sees that life is at an end ;
“ And, goaded by his rage and hatred hot,
“ Seeks to offend her corse that feels it not.

LXXVIII.

- “ As serpent, by the pointed spear pinned down,
“ Fixes his teeth in it, with fruitless spite ;
“ Or as the mastiff runs towards a stone,
“ Which has been flung by some wayfaring wight,
“ And gnaws it in his rage, nor will be gone
“ Until he venge himself; 'tis so the knight,
“ Than any mastiff, any serpent, worse
“ Offends Drusilla's cold and lifeless corse.

LXXIX.

- “ And, for he venteth not, nor slakes his mood,
“ By foul abuse upon the carcase done,
“ Among the women, a large multitude,
“ He springs, and there shows mercy unto none.
“ Mown are we with his impious sword, as strewed
“ Is grass with scythe, when dried by summer sun.
“ There is no 'scape; for straightways of our train
“ Are full a hundred maimed, and thirty slain.

LXXX.

- “ He of his vassals is so held in dread,
“ There is no man who dares to lift his eyes :
“ The women with the meaner sort are fled,
“ And whosoever can, the temple flies.
“ His friends against the furious fit make head,
“ At last, with kind constraint and suppliant cries ;
“ And, leaving every thing in tears below,
“ Him in his castle on the rock bestow.

LXXXI.

- “ His wrath enduring still, to send away
“ The wretch determines all the female band :
“ In that, his will us utterly to slay
“ His people and his friends, with prayer, withstand ;
“ And he bids publish, on that very day,
“ An order for us all to leave his land ;
“ Placed such his pleasure on these confines : woe
“ To them that nearer to his castle go !

LXXXII.

- “ Thus husbands from their wives divided are,
“ Mothers from sons : if hither to resort,
“ Despite that order, any one should dare,
“ Let none know this, who might the deed report !
“ For sorely mulcted for the transgression were
“ Many, and many slain in cruel sort.
“ A statute for his town next made the peer :
“ Of fouler law we neither read nor hear.

LXXXIII.

- “ It wills, all women found within the vale,
“ (For thither even yet will some descend,)
“ His men with rods shall on the shoulders whale,
“ And into exile from those countries send ;
“ But first their gowns shall clip, and parts unveil
“ That decency and natural shame offend ;
“ And if with escort of an armed knight
“ Any wend thither, they are slain outright.

LXXXIV.

- “ Those that an armed warrior’s escort have,
“ By this ill man, to piety a foe,
“ Are dragged as victims to his children’s grave,
“ Where his own hand inflicts the murderous blow.
“ Stript ignominiously of armour, glaive,
“ And steed, their champions to his prisons go;
“ And this can he compel; for, night and day,
“ A thousand men the tyrant’s hest obey;

LXXXV.

- “ And I will add, moreover, ’tis his will,
“ Does he free any one, he first shall swear
“ Upon the holy wafer, that he still
“ To woman, while he lives, will hatred bear.
“ If then these ladies and yourself to spill
“ Seem good to you, to yonder walls repair;
“ And put to proof withal, if prowess more
“ Or cruelty prevails in Marganor.”

LXXXVI.

So saying, in those maids of martial might
First she such pity moved and then disdain,
That they (had it been day instead of night)
Would then have gone against that castellan.
There rest the troop; and when Aurora’s light
Serves as a signal to the starry train,
That they should all before the sun recede,
They don the cuirass and remount the steed:

LXXXVII.

And now, in act to go, that company
Behind them hear the stony road resound
With a long trample, when those warlike three
Look down the vale and roll their eyes around ;
And they from thence, a stone's-throw distant, see
A troop, which through a narrow pathway wound :
A score they are perhaps in number, who
On horseback, or on foot, their way pursue.

LXXXVIII.

They with them on a horse a woman haul,
(Whom stricken sore in years her visage shows,)
In guise wherein some doleful criminal
Condemned to gallows, fire, or prison goes ;
Who, notwithstanding that wide interval,
Is by her features known, as well as clothes :
They of the village, mid the cavalcade,
Know her for fair Drusilla's chamber maid.

LXXXIX.

The chamber wench, made prisoner with his prize,
By the rapacious stripling, as I shewed,
Who being trusted with that ill emprise,
The poisoned draught of foul effect had brewed.
From the others she and those solemnities
Had kept away, suspecting what ensued :
Yea, this while, from that lordship had she fled,
Where she in safety hoped to hide her head.

XC.

News being after to her foeman brought,
That she retired in Ostericche lay,
He, with intent to burn the woman, sought
To have her in his power by every way;
And finally unhappy Avarice, bought
By costly presents, and by proffered pay,
Wrought on a lord, assured upon whose lands
The beldam lived, to put her in his hands.

XCI.

He on a sumpter horse the prisoner sent
To Constance-town, like merchandise address;
Fastened and bound in manner to prevent
The use of speech, and prisoned in a chest.
From whence that rabble, *his* ill instrument,
Who has all pity banished from his breast,
Had hither brought her, that his impious rage
That cruel man might on the hag assuage.

XCII.

As the flood, swoln with Vesulo's thick snows,
The farther that it foams upon its way,
And, with Ticino and Lambra, seaward goes,
Ada, and other streams that tribute pay,
So much more haughty and impetuous flows;
Rogero so, the more he hears display
Morganor's guilt, and so that gentle pair
Of damsels filled with fiercer choler are.

XCIII.

Them with such hatred, them with such disdain
Against the wretch so many crimes incense,
That they will punish him, despite the train
Of armed men arraid in his defence :
But speedy death appears too kind a pain,
And insufficient for such foul offence.
Better they deem, mid pangs prolonged and slow,
He all the bitterness of death should know.

XCIV.

But first 'tis right that woman to unchain,
She whom the hangman-crew to death escort ;
And the quick rowel and the loosened rein
Made the quick coursers make that labour short.
Never had those assaulted to sustain
Encounter of so fell and fierce a sort ;
Who held it for a grace, with loss of shield,
Harness and captive dame, to quit the field ;

XCV.

Even as the wolf, who, laden with his prey,
Is homeward to his secret cavern bound,
And, when he deems that safest is the way,
Beholds it crost by hunter and by hound,
Flings down his load, and swiftly darts away,
Where most o'ergrown with brushwood is the ground.
Nor quicker are that band to void the vale,
Than those hold three are quicker to assail.

XCVI.

Not only they the dame and martial gear,
But many horses they as well forsook;
And, as the surest refuge in their fear,
Cast themselves down from bank and caverned nook:
Which pleased the damsels and the youthful peer;
Who three of those forsaken horses took,
To mount those three, whom, through the day before,
Upon their croups the three good coursers bore.

XCVII.

Thence, lightened thus, their way they thither bend,
Where that despicable, shameful, lordship lies;
Resolved the beldam in their band shall wend,
To see Drusilla venged; in vain denies
That woman, who misdoubts the adventure's end,
And grieves, and shrieks, and weeps in piteous wise:
For flinging her upon Frontino's croup,
Rogerio bears her off amid the troop.

XCVIII.

They reached a summit, and from thence espied
A town with many houses, large and rich;
With nought to stop the way on any side,
As neither compassed round by wall or ditch.
A rock was in the middle, fortified
With a tall tower, upon its topmost pitch.
Fearlessly thither pricked the warriors, who
Marganor's mansion in that fortress knew.

XCIX.

As soon as in the town that cavalcade
Arrived, some footmen, who kept watch and ward,
Behind those warriors closed a barricade;
While *that*, before, they found already barred.
And lo! Sir Marganor, with men arraid,
Some foot, some horsemen! armed was all the guard;
Who to the strangers, in few words, but bold,
The wicked custom of his lordship told.

C.

Marphisa, who had planned the thing whilere
With Aymon's daughter and the youthful knight,
For answer, spurred against the cavalier;
And, valiant as she was and full of might,
Not putting in the rest her puissant spear,
Or baring that good sword, so famed in fight,
So smote him with her fist upon the head,
That on his horse's neck he fell half dead.

CI.

The maid of France is with Marphisa gone,
Nor in the rear is seen Rogero's crest;
Who with those two his course so bravely run,
That, though his lance he raised not from the rest,
Six men he slew; transfix'd the paunch of one,
Another's head, of four the neck or breast;
I' the sixth he broke it, whom in flight he speared:
It pierced his spine and at his paps appeared.

CII.

As many as are touched, so many lie
On earth, by Bradamant's gold lance o'erthrown ;
She seems a bolt, dismiss'd from burning sky,
Which, in its fury, shivers and beats down
Whatever it encounters, far and nigh.
Some fly to plain, or castle from the town,
Others to sheltering church and house repair ;
And none, save dead, are seen in street or square.

CIII.

Meanwhile the hands of Marganor, behind
His back, the fierce Marphisa had made fast,
And to Drusilla's maid the wretch consign'd,
Well pleas'd that such a care on her was cast.
To burn the town 'twas afterwards design'd,
Save it repented of its errors past,
Repealed the statute Marganor had made,
And a new law, imposed by her, obeyed.

CIV.

Such end to compass is no hard assay ;
For, besides fearing lest Marphisa yearn
To execute more vengeance,—lest she say,
—‘ She one and all will slaughter and will burn,’—
The townsmen all were adverse to the sway
And cruel statute of that tyrant stern ;
But did, as others mostly do, that best
Obey the master whom they most detest.

CV.

Since none dares trust another, nor his will,
—Out of suspicion—to his comrade break,
They let him banish one, another kill,
From *this* his substance, *that* his honour take.
But the heart cries to Heaven, that here is still,
Till God and saints at length to vengeance wake:
Who, albeit they due punishment suspend,
By mighty pain the long delay amend.

CVI.

The rabble, full of rage and enmity,
Now seeks the wretch with word and deed to grieve;
As, it is said, all strip the fallen tree,
Which from its roots the wintry winds upheave:
Let rulers in his sad example see,
Ill doers in the end shall ill receive.
To view fell Marganor's disastrous fall,
Fit penance for his sins, pleased great and small.

CVII.

Many, of whom the sister had been slain,
The mother, or the daughter, or the wife,
Seeking no more their rebel wrath to rein,
Hurry, with their own hands to take his life;
And young Rogero and the damsels twain
Can scarce defend the felon in that strife;
Whom those illustrious three had doomed to die,
Mid trouble, fear, and lengthened agony.

CVIII.

To the hag, who bore such hatred to that wight,
As woman to an enemy can bear,
They give their prisoner naked, bound so tight,
He will not at one shake the cordage tear;
And she, her pains and sorrow to requite,
Crimsons the wretch's body, here and there,
With a sharp goad, which, mid that village band,
A peasant churl had put into her hand.

CIX.

Nor she the courier-maid, nor they that ride
With her, aye mindful how they had been shent,
Now let their hands hang idle by their side;
No less than that old crone on vengeance bent:
Such was their fierce desire, it nullified
The power to harm; but rage must have its vent,
Him one with stones, another with her nails,
This with her teeth, with needles *that*, assails.

CX.

As torrent one while foams in haughty tide,
When fed with mighty rain or melted snow;
And, rending from the mountain's rugged side
Tree, rock, and crop and field, the waters go:
Then comes a season when its crested pride
Is vanished, and its vigour wasted so,
A child, a woman, everywhere may tread,
And often dry-shod cross, its rugged bed.

CXI.

So Marganor whilere each bound and bourn
Made tremble, whereso'er his name was heard :
Now one is come to bruise the tyrant's horn ;
And now his prowess is so little feared,
That even the little children work him scorn :
Some pluck his hair and others pluck his beard.
Thence young Rogero and the damsels twain
Towards his rock-built castle turn the rein.

CXII.

This without contest its possessors yield,
And the rich goods preserved in that repair.
These the friends partly spoiled, and partly dealed
To Ulany and that attendant pair.
With them, recovered was the golden shield,
And those three monarchs that were prisoned there ;
Who, without arms, afoot, towards that hold
Had wended, as meseems whilere was told.

CXIII.

For from the day that they were overthrown
By Bradamant, afoot, they evermore,
Unarmed, in company with her had gone,
That hither came from her so distant shore.
I know not, I, if it was better done
Or worse, by her, that they their arms forbore :
Worse, touching her defence; but better far,
If they were losers in the doubtful war.

CXIV.

For she would have been dragged,—like others, whom
Armed men had thither brought beneath their guide,
(Unhappy women) to the brothers' tomb,—
And by the sacrificial knife have died.
Death, sure, is worse, and more disastrous doom
Than showing that which modesty would hide;
And they who can to force ascribe the blame,
Extinguish this and every other shame.

CXV.

Before they hence depart, the martial twain
Assemble the inhabitants, to swear,
‘ They to their wives the rule of that domain
‘ Will leave, as well as every other care ;
‘ And that they will chastise, with heavy pain,
‘ Whoever to oppose this law shall dare.
‘ —In fine, man's privileges, whatsoe'er,
‘ They swear, shall be conferred on woman here :’

CXVI.

Then make them promise, ‘ never to bestow
‘ Harbourage on whosoever thither sped,
‘ Footman or cavalier, nor even allow
‘ Any beneath a roof to hide his head,
‘ Unless he swore by God and saints, or vow
‘ Yet stronger made—if stronger could be said—
‘ That he the sex's cause would aye defend,
‘ Foe to their foes, and woman's faithful friend ;

CXVII.

‘And, if he then were wived, or ever were
‘—Sooner or later—linked in nuptial noose,
‘Still to his wife he would allegiance bear,
‘Nor e’er compliance with her will refuse.’
Marphisa says, ‘within the year, she there
‘Will be, and ere the trees their foliage lose;
‘And, save she find her statute in effect,
‘That borough fire and ruin may expect.

CXVIII.

Nor hence they part till from the filthy place,
Wherein it lay, Drusilla’s corse is borne;
Her with her lord they in a tomb encase,
And, with what means the town supplies, adorn.
Drusilla’s ancient woman, in this space,
Margaror’s body with her goad has torn.
Who only grieves she has not wind enow,
No respite to his torture to allow.

CXIX.

Beside a church, the martial damsels twain
Behold a pillar, standing in the square;
Whereon the wicked lord of the domain
Had graved that mad and cruel law; the pair,
In imitation, his helm, plate, and chain,
And shield, in guise of trophy fasten there;
And afterwards upon the pillar trace
That law they had enacted for the place.

CXX.

Within the town the troop set up their rest,
Until the law is graved, of different frame
From that before upon the stone imprest,
Which every woman doom'd to death and shame.
With the intention to replace her vest,
Here from that band divides the Islandick dame;
Who deems, at court 'twere shameful to appear,
Unless adorned and mantled as whilere.

CXXI.

Here Ulany remained, and in her power
Remained the wicked tyrant Marganor:
She, lest he any how, in evil hour,
Should break his bonds and injure damsel more,
Made him, one day, leap headlong from a tower,
Who never took so stiff a leap before.
No more of her and hers! I of the crew
That journey toward Arles, the tale pursue.

CXXII.

Throughout all *that* and the succeeding day,
Till the forenoon, proceed those banded friends¹³;
And, where the main-road branches, and one way
Towards the camp, to Arles the other tends,
Again embrace the lovers, and oft say
A last farewell, which evermore offends.
The damsels seek the camp; to Arles is gone
Rogerio; and my canto I have done.

NOTES TO CANTO XXXVII.

1.

Erewhile Marullo, &c.

Stanza viii. line 1.

"*Marullus Tarchoniata*, a Greek, no less skilled in arms than letters: he served in Italy, and married Florentina, daughter of Bartolomeo Scala, a lady of erudition. He lost his life by a fall into a deep pit, and died the same day that Ludovico Sforza fell into the power of the French. Pontano was born at a castle belonging to the duke of Spoleto; his father being killed in an insurrection of the people, he fled, when a youth, to Naples in great poverty, and was received by Antonio Panchernita, secretary to Alphonso of Arragon; he succeeded Panchernita in his office, and married a rich Neapolitan lady: he wrote well in prose and verse, and died at seventy-seven years of age at Naples."—HOOLE.

"*Tito Vespasiano Strozzi and Hercules his son*. Tito wrote many things, but was excelled by his son Hercules, who was also a great improver of the theatre: he was much addicted to women, which passion at last ended in his death. They both lived at Mantua. Hercules wrote in praise of Isabella, wife to the duke of Mantua.

"*Capello*, a Venetian gentleman and an excellent Tuscan poet. *Bembo*, afterwards cardinal; he wrote in prose and verse, and

excelled in amorous subjects; which was objected to him when Paul III. raised him to the cardinalship.

"*That writer*, in verse 3, is *Count Baldassar Castiglione*, who excelled in all the qualities of an accomplished courtier: he wrote a treatise entitled *Il Cortigiano* (The Courtier).

"*Alamanni*. Luigi Alamanni, an excellent poet: he lived some time in banishment in France, like another Ovid, where he wrote many things, particularly his *Girone il Cortese* (Girone the Courteous), a poetical romance.

"*Those two*, in verse 5, are two of the name of Luigi: Gonzaga, cousin to the duke of Mantua; and Gonzaga, called of Gazalo, for his intrepidity surnamed Rodomont, who afterwards married Isabella."—H.

2.

the mighty city rule,

Which Mincius parts, and moats with marshy pool.

Stanza viii. lines 7 and 8.

The mighty city is Mantua.

3.

To him his constant Isabel hath shown.

Stanza ix. line 7.

"This Isabella was daughter of Vespasian Gonzaga, and being promised to signor Luigi of the same family, Pope Clement, exasperated with Luigi for being in arms with the Imperialists at the sack of Rome, endeavoured by every means to make her marry another; but she, neither by threats nor promises, would be ever induced to break the faith that she had plighted."—H.

*Of a sure pillar of pure truth possess
In her.*

Stanza xi. lines 5 and 6.

"Alluding to her name, Colonna."—H.

4.

New trophies he on Oglio's bank has shown.

Stanza xii. line 1.

"The castle of this lord of Gazalo was situated not far from the river Oglio. By the neighbouring stream he means the Mincius.

"*Hercules Bentivoglio*. Son of Annibale: he wrote eclogues and comedies, and likewise excelled in music: he lived at Ferrara.

"*Reynel Trivultio—Gludecco*. Renato Trivultio of Milan: he composed in octave stanzas on amorous subjects. Francesco, a Florentine, a good writer in Tuscan verse.

"*Molza*. Excelled both in Latin and Tuscan verse."—H.

5.

There's Hercules of the Carnuti, &c.

Stanza xiii. line 1.

"Hercules II. then only duke of Carnuti, afterwards duke of Ferrara."—H.

Mention has already been made of *the lord of Guasto*: but it should be added, that he too was a poet.

6.

Mid victories born, Victoria is her name.

Stanza xviii. line 1.

"Victoria Colonna, a marchioness of Pescara, daughter of Fabrizio Colonna, a commander of great courage and conduct: she was wife to Francesco Davolo, marquis of Pescara: she was a lady of consummate genius and piety, and composed many elegant poems in praise of her husband, and other works on religious subjects."—H.

7.

If chaste Laodamia, &c.

Stanza xix. line 1.

“*Laodamia*, wife to *Protesilaüs*, who went to the siege of Troy: he was the first who landed, and fell by the hand of *Hector*: his dead body being sent home to *Laodamia*, she expired upon it.

“*Evadne*, wife of *Capaneus*, who went to the siege of Thebes: her husband being dead, she threw herself on the funeral pile, and was consumed with him.

“*Argia*, daughter to *Adrastus*, king of *Argos*, and wife to *Polynices*. *Polynices* and his brother *Eteocles* being dead by the hands of each other, *Creon* forbade them to be buried; but *Argia*, accompanied by her sister *Antigone*, went in the night to the field of battle, and finding the body of her husband, gave it burial; on which the tyrant commanded *Argia* and *Antigone* to be put to death.

“*Arria*, wife to *Pætus*, who was condemned to death for being privy to a conspiracy against the emperor *Claudius*. *Arria*, with great intrepidity, drew a dagger, and plunging it into her bosom, presented it to her husband with this expression, ‘that she died without pain, but the agony she felt was for the death which he must suffer.’”—H.

8.

As Vulcan’s son, &c.

Stanza xxvii. line 1.

“*Erichthonius*, the son of *Vulcan*, was born with the feet of a dragon, and was given by *Pallas*, shut up in a chest to be kept by the three daughters of *Cecrops*, king of *Athens*, *Pandroso*, *Erse*, and *Aglauros*, with strict orders not to look therein; but *Aglauros*, through curiosity, opened the chest, and discovered the infant, on which they were all three punished. *Erichthonius*, when he was grown up, invented the

use of the chariot, in order, when he rode therein, to conceal his deformity."—H.

9.

Not more bold Jason wondered, &c.

Stanza xxxvi. line 1.

"The women of the island of Lemnos being jealous that their husbands meant to forsake them for other wives, formed a conspiracy against the men, and at their return massacred them all in one night: Hypermnestra only saved the life of her old father king Thöas, and sent him in safety from the island. Jason afterwards arriving thither, found with surprise the kingdom only held by women. See *Ovid's* Ep. Hypsipile to Jason."—H.

10.

In the holy orders of fair chivalry.

Stanza xli. line 5.

In a curious little poem, in which Saladin is made to request knighthood of a Christian prisoner, the latter performs all the previous ceremonies, but stops short of ordination, which, he says, using a very coarse illustration, *is too sacred to be conferred upon a heathen*. Many other passages might be cited from the literature of the middle ages, in support of Ariosto's epithet of *holy*, as applied to orders of knighthood.

11.

Olindro slain, &c.

Stanza lvi. line 1.

"This story of Olindro and Drusilla is taken from Plutarch, from whom Castiglione has translated it in his *Cortigiano*. It is likewise told with many circumstances by Apuleius in his *Golden Ass*: but Ariosto has altered and improved the story."—H.

12.

When the holy obsequies at last were o'er, &c.

Stanza lxix. line 1.

The requiem to Olindro with which the service was to begin.

13.

Throughout all that and the succeeding day,

Till the forenoon, proceed, &c.

Stanza cxxii. lines 1 and 2.

Tutto quel giorno e l'altro fin' appresso

L'ora di terza andaro, *etc.*

The *terza* is, strictly speaking, the third canonical hour; but according to the ecclesiastical mode of counting time from sunset to sunrise, this and all the other hours must vary according to the season; and, therefore, cannot exactly correspond with any of ours.

THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO XXXVIII.

ARGUMENT.

*To Arles the Child, to Charles Marphisa wends,
To be baptized, with Bradamant for guide.
Astolpho from the holy realm descends;
Through whom with sight the Nubian is supplied:
Agramant's land he with his troop offends;
But he is of his Africk realm so wide,
With Charles he bargains, that, on either side,
Two knights by strife their quarrel should decide.*

THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO XXXVIII.

I.

YE courteous ladies, who unto my strain
Kind audience lend—I read it in your cheer—
That good Rogero should depart again
So suddenly, from her that held him dear,
Displeases ye, and scarce inflicts less pain
Than that which Bradamant endured whilere:
I read you also argue, to his shame,
That feebly burned in him the amorous flame.

II.

If from her side for other cause had gone,
Against that lady's will, the youthful lord;
Though in the hope more treasure to have won
Than swelled rich Cræsus' or rich Crassus' hoard,
I too should deem the dart, by Cupid thrown,
Had not the heart-core of Rogero gored.
For such a sovereign joy, a prize so high
No silver and no gold could ever buy.

III.

Yet to preserve our honour not alone
Deserves excuse, it also merits praise :
This to preserve, I say, when to have done
In other wise, might shame and scandal raise;
And had fair Bradamant reluctance shown,
And obstinately interposed delays,
This, as a certain sign, had served to prove
That lady's little wit or little love.

IV.

For if *his* life, whom gentle woman loves,
As her own life she values, or before;
(I speak of one at whom young Cupid roves¹
With arrows which beneath the mantle gore)
His honour to his pleasure it behoves
That woman to prefer, by so much more,
As man beyond his life his honour treasures,
Esteemed by him above all other pleasures.

V.

His duty good Rogero satisfied,
Following the royal lord with whom he came;
For having no fair cause to quit his side,
He could not leave the Paynim without shame;
And, if his sire had by Almontes died,
In this, King Agramant was not to blame;
Who for his parents' every past offence
Had made Rogero mighty recompense.

VI.

He will perform his duty to repair
To his liege-lord; so did that martial maid;
Who had not with reiterated prayer
(As so she might have done) Rogero stayed.
The stripling may appay the warlike fair
In other season, if not now appaid;
But twice two hundred years will not atone
The crying sin of honour once foregone.

VII.

To Arles-town whither had his king conveyed
His remnant of a host, he pricked anew;
While they that, since their kindred was displayed,
Had a close friendship formed—the damsels two—
Thither together go where Charles had made
His mightiest effort, with the christian crew;
Hoping by siege or fight to break the foe,
And free his kingdom from so long a woe.

VIII.

Bradamant, when she in the camp appeared,
Was greeted with a welcome warm and kind.
On all sides was she hailed, by all was cheered;
And she to this or that her head inclined.
Rinaldo, when he of her coming heard,
Met her; nor young Richardo stayed behind;
Nor Richardet; nor others of her race;
And all received the maid with joyful face.

IX.

When next 'tis known, the second of the twain
Is that Marphisa, so in arms renowned,
Who from Catay unto the bounds of Spain
Had journeyed, with a thousand laurels crowned,
Nor rich nor poor within their tents remain:
The curious crowd, encompassing them round,
Press, harm, and heave each other here and there,
In the sole wish to see so bright a pair.

X.

By them was Charles saluted reverently,
And the first day was this (has Turpin shown)
Marphisa had been seen to bend her knee:
For Pepin's royal son to her, alone,
Deserving of such duty seemed to be,
Mid emperors or kings that filled a throne,
Baptized or infidel, of all those named
For mighty riches, or for valour famed.

XI.

Her kindly Charlemagne received, and wide
Of the pavilions met, in open view;
And, above king, and prince, and peer, beside
Himself the monarch placed that damsel true.
Who go not, are dismiss'd; so none abide
In little time, except the good and few.
The Paladins and lords remain; without,
Is left the unrespected rabble-rout.

XII.

Marphisa first began in grateful strain :

- “ Unconquered Cæsar, glorious and august,
- “ Who, to Alcides’ strait from Indian main,
- “ Mak’st Scythian’s pale and Æthiop’s race adust
- “ Revere thy Christian cross of snowy grain,
- “ —Of earthly monarchs thou most sage and just—
- “ Hither thy glory, which no limits bound,
- “ Has brought me from the world’s extremest ground;

XIII.

- “ And (to avow the truth) in jealous mood
- “ Alone I came, alone with thee to fight;
- “ Because I grudged that king so puissant shou’d
- “ Exist on earth, save he observed my rite.
- “ Hence reek thy ravaged fields with Christian blood;
- “ And yet with greater rancour and despite,
- “ Like cruel foe, I purposed to offend,
- “ But that it chanced, one changed me to a friend.

XIV.

- “ When to worst harm and scaith thy hands I doom,
- “ I find (as at my leisure I will show)
- “ Rogero of Risa was my father, whom
- “ An evil brother traitorously laid low.
- “ Me my sad mother carried in her womb
- “ Beyond the sea, and bore in want and woe.
- “ Till my seventh year by wizard nourished, I
- “ Was stolen from him by thieves of Araby.

XV.

- “ They to a king in Persia vended me,
“ That after died beneath my faulchion, who
“ Would fain have taken my virginity.
“ When grown, that king and all his court I slew;
“ Chased his ill race, and seized his royalty;
“ And—such my fortune—by a month or two,
“ I eighteen years had not o’erpast, before
“ I added to my realm six kingdoms more;

XVI.

- “ And, moved by envy of thy glorious fame,
“ I in my heart resolved (as thou hast heard)
“ To abate the grandeur of thy mighty name:
“ I haply so had done; I haply erred.
“ But now a chance has served *that* will to tame,
“ And clip my fury’s wings; the having heard
“ Since I arrived in Christendom, how we
“ Are bound by ties of consanguinity;

XVII.

- “ And, for my father thee, as kinsman, served,
“ So thou a kin and servant hast in me;
“ And I that envy, that fierce hate, which nerved
“ Mine arm whilere, now blot from memory.
“ Nay, these for evil Agramant reserved,
“ And for his sire’s and uncle’s kin shall be;
“ They who were whilom guilty of the death
“ Of that unhappy pair, who gave me breath.”

XVIII.

She adds, 'the Christian faith she will receive,
' And, after having spent king Agramant,
' Will home return, with royal Charles's leave,
' Her kingdom to baptize in the Levant,
' And war upon whatever nations cleave
' To cheating Mahound or to Termagant;
' Promising that whate'er her arms obtain
' Shall be the Christian faith's and empire's gain.'

XIX.

Charles, no less eloquent upon his side,
Than bold in deed and prudent in design,
Much that illustrious lady magnified,
And much her father, much her noble line :
He courteously to every point replied;
And of his heart his open front was sign.
As his last words, ' that he received the maid
' As kinswoman and child,' the monarch said.

XX.

Then rose and locked her in a new embrace,
And kissed her, like a daughter, on the brow.
Morgana and Clermont's kin, with joyful face,
All thither troop ; 'twere tedious to tell how
Rinaldo did the gentle damsel grace ;
For he had oftentimes espied ere now
Her martial prowess, tried by goodly test,
When they with girding siege Albracca pressed.

XXI.

'Twere long to tell how, with those worthies met,
Guido rejoiced to see Marphisa there ;
Gryphon, and Aquilant, and Sansonet,
That with her in the cruel city were²;
Vivian, and Malagigi, and Richardet ;
Who, when Maganza's traitors made repair,
With those ill purchasers of Spain to trade,
Found such a faithful comrade in the maid.

XXII.

They deck the ground for the ensuing day ;
And Charlemagne takes care himself to see
That they the place shall sumptuously array,
Wherein Marphisa's baptism is to be.
Bishops are gathered, learned clerks, and they
Who ken the laws of Christianity ;
That taught in all its doctrine by their care
And holy skill may be that martial fair.

XXIII.

In sacred stole, pontifical, arraid,
Her the archbishop Turpin did baptize ;
Charlemagne from the healthful font the maid
Uplifted with befitting ceremonies.
But it is time the witless head to aid
With that, which treasured in the phial lies,
Wherewith Astolpho, from the lowest star³,
Descended in Elias' fiery car.

XXIV.

The duke descended from the lucid round,
On this our earthly planet's loftiest height.
Whither he with that blessed vase was bound,
Which was the mighty champion's brain to right.
A herb of sovereign virtue on that ground
The apostle shows, and with it bids the knight
The Nubian's eyeballs touch, when him anew
He visits, and restore that sovereign's view.

XXV.

That he, for this and for his first desert,
May give him bands, Biserta to assail;
And shows him how that people inexpert
He may to battle train, in plate and mail;
And how to pass the deserts, without hurt,
Where men are dazzled by the sandy gale.
The order that throughout should be maintained
From point to point, the sainted sire explained;

XXVI.

Then made him that plumed beast again bestride,
Rogero's and Atlantes' steed whilere.
By sainted John dismiss, his reverend guide,
Those holy regions left the cavalier;
And coasting Nile, on one or the other side,
Saw Nubia's realm before him soon appear;
And there, in its chief city, to the ground
Descended, and anew Senapus found.

XXVII.

Great was the joy, and great was the delight,
Wherewith that king received the English lord ;
Who well remembered how the gentle knight
Had from the loathsome harpies freed his board.
But when the humour, that obscured his sight,
Valiant Astolpho scaled, and now restored
Was the blind sovereign's eyesight as before,
He would that warrior as a god adore.

XXVIII.

So that not only those whom he demands
For the Bisertine war, he gives in aid ;
But adds a hundred thousand from his bands,
And offer of his royal person made.
Scarce on the open plain embattled stands,
—All foot—the Nubian host, for war arraid.
For few the horses which that region bore ;
Of elephants and camels a large store.

XXIX.

The night before the day, when on its road
The Nubian force should march, Astolpho rose,
And his winged hippogryph again bestrode :
Then, hurrying ever south, in fury goes
To a high hill, the southern wind's abode ;
Whence he towards the Bears in fury blows :
There finds a cave, through whose strait entrance
breaks
The fell and furious Auster, when he wakes.

XXX.

He, as his master erst instruction gave,
With him an empty bladder had conveyed ;
Which, at the vent of that dim Alpine cave,
Wherein reposed the wearied wind, was laid
Quaintly and softly by the baron brave ;
And so unlooked for was the ambuscade,
That, issuing forth at morn, to sweep the plains,
Auster imprisoned in the skin remains ⁴.

XXXI.

To Nubia he, rejoicing in his prey,
Returns ; and with that very light the peer,
With the black host, sets out upon his way,
And lets the victual follow in his rear.
Towards Mount Atlas with his whole array
In safety goes the glorious cavalier.
Through shifting plains of powdery sand he past,
Nor dreaded danger from the sultry blast ;

XXXII.

And having gained the mountain's hither side,
Whence are discerned the plain, and distant brine,
He chooses from the swarm he has to guide
The noblest and most fit for discipline ;
And makes them, here and there, in troops divide,
At a hill's foot, wherewith the plains confine ;
Then leaves his host and climbs the hill's ascent,
Like one that is on lofty thoughts intent.

XXXIII.

After he, lowly kneeling in the dust,
His holy master had implored, in true
Assurance he was heard, he downward thrust
A heap of stones. O what things may he do
That in the Saviour wholly puts his trust!
The stones beyond the use of nature grew³;
Which rolling to the sandy plain below,
Next, neck and muzzle, legs and belly show.

XXXIV.

They, neighing shrill, down narrow paths repair,
With lusty leaps; and lighting on the plain,
Uplift the croup, like coursers as they are,
Some bay, some roan, and some of dapple stain.
The crowds that waiting in the valleys were,
Layed hands on them, and seized them by the rein.
Thus in a thought each soldier had his horse,
Born ready reined and saddled for the course.

XXXV.

He fourscore thousand of his Nubian power,
One hundred and two footmen, in a day
To horsemen changes, who wide Afric scour,
And, upon every side, sack, burn, and slay.
Agramant had intrusted town and tower,
Till his return, to king Branzardo's sway,
To Fersa's king, and him of the Algaziers;
And these against Astolpho lead their spears.

XXXVI.

Erewhile a nimble bark, with sail and oar,
They had dispatched, which, stirring feet and wings,
News of the Nubian monarch's outrage bore
To Agramant from his vicegerent kings,
That rests not, night nor day, till to the shore
Of Provence she her doleful tidings brings;
And finds her monarch half subdued in Arles,
For camped within a mile was conquering Charles.

XXXVII.

Agramant, hearing in what peril lies
His realm, through his attack on Pepin's reign,
Him in this pressing peril to advise,
Calls kings and princes of the paynim train;
And when he once or twice has turned his eyes
On sage Sobrino and the king of Spain,
—Eldest and wisest they those lords among—
The monarch so bespeaks the assembled throng:

XXXVIII.

“ Albeit it fits not captain, as I know,
“ To say, ‘ *on this I thought not*,’ this I say;
“ Because when from a quarter comes the blow,
“ From every human forethought far away,
“ ’Tis for such fault a fair excuse, I trow;
“ And here all hinges; I did ill to lay
“ Unfurnished Africk open to attack,
“ If there was ground to fear the Nubian sack.

XXXIX.

“ But who could think, save only God on high
“ Prescient of all which is to be below,
“ That, from a land, beneath such distant sky,
“ Such mighty host would come, to work us woe?
“ Twixt whom and us unstable deserts lie,
“ Those shifting sands, which restless whirlwinds blow:
“ Yet they their camp have round Biserta placed,
“ And laid the better part of Africk waste.

XL.

“ I now on this, O peers! your counsel crave.
“ If, bootless, homeward I should wend my way,
“ Or should not such a fair adventure wave,
“ Till Charles with me a prisoner I convey;
“ Or how I may as well our Africk save,
“ And ruin this redoubted empire, say.
“ Who can advise, is prayed his lore to shew,
“ That we may learn the best, and that pursue.”

XLI.

He said; and on Marsilius seated nigh
Next turned his eyes, who in the signal read,
That it belonged to him to make reply
To what the king of Africa had said.
The Spaniard rose, and bending reverently
To Agramant the knee as well as head,
Again his honoured seat in council prest,
And in these words the Moorish king address:

XLII.

- “ My liege, does Rumour good or ill report,
“ It still increases them; hence shall I ne’er,
“ Under despondence, lack for due support,
“ Nor bolder course than is befitting steer,
“ For what may chance, of good or evil sort;
“ Weighing in even balance hope and fear,
“ O’errated still; and which we should not mete
“ By what I hear so many tongues repeat;

XLIII.

- “ Which should so much more doubtfully be viewed,
“ As it seems less with likelihood to stand.
“ Now it is seen, if there be likelihood,
“ That king who reigns in so remote a land,
“ Followed by such a mighty multitude,
“ Should set his foot on warlike Africk’s strand;
“ Traversing sands, to which in evil hour
“ Cambyses trusted his ill-omened power.

XLIV.

- “ I well believe, that from some neighbouring hill
“ The Arabs have poured down, to waste the plain;
“ Who, for the country was defended ill,
“ Have taken, burnt, destroyed and sacked and slain;
“ And that Branzardo, who your place doth fill,
“ As viceroy and lieutenant of the reign,
“ Has set down thousands, where he tens should write;
“ The better to excuse him in your sight.

XLV.

- “ The Nubian squadrons, I will even yield,
“ Have been rained down on Africk from the skies;
“ Or haply they have come, in clouds concealed,
“ In that their march was hidden from all eyes:
“ Think you, because unaided in the field,
“ Your Africk from such host in peril lies?
“ Your garrisons were sure of coward vein,
“ If they were scared by such a craven train.

XLVI.

- “ But will you send some frigates, albeit few,
“ (Provided that unfurled your standards be)
“ No sooner shall they loose from hence, that crew
“ Of spoilers shall within their confines flee;
“ —Nubians are they, or idle Arabs—who,
“ Knowing that you are severed by the sea
“ From your own realm, and warring with our band,
“ Have taken courage to assail your land.

XLVII.

- “ Now take your time for vengeance, when the son
“ Of Pepin is without his nephew's aid.
“ Since bold Orlando is away, by none
“ Of the hostile sect resistance can be made.
“ If, through neglect or blindness, be foregone
“ The glorious Fortune, which for you has stayed,
“ She her bald front, as now her hair, will show,
“ To our long infamy and mighty woe.”

XLVIII.

Thus warily the Spanish king replied,
Proving by this and other argument,
The Moorish squadrons should in France abide,
Till Charlemagne was into exile sent.
But King Sobrino, he that plainly spied
The scope whereon Marsilius was intent,
To public good preferring private gain,
So spake in answer to the king of Spain :

XLIX.

“ My liege, when I to peace exhorted you,
“ Would that my prophecy had proved less just !
“ Or, if I was to prove a prophet true,
“ Ye in Sobrino had reposed more trust,
“ Than in King Rodomont and in that crew,
“ Alzirdo, Martasine, and Marbalust !
“ Whom I would here see gladly, front to front ;
“ But see most gladly boastful Rodomont.

L.

“ To twit that warrior with his threat, ‘ to do
‘ By France, what by the brittle glass is done ;
‘ And throughout heaven and hell your course pursue,
‘ Yea (as the monarch said) your course outrun.’
“ Yet lapt in foul and loathsome ease, while you
“ So need his help, lies Ulien’s lazy son * ;
“ And I, that as a coward was decried
“ For my true prophecy, am at your side ;

* Rodomont.

LI.

- “ And ever will be while this life I bear ;
“ Which, albeit 'tis with years sore laden, still
“ Daily for you is risked with them that are
“ The best of France ; and—be he who he will—
“ There is not mortal living, who will dare
“ To say Sobrino's deeds were ever ill :
“ Yea, many who vaunt more, amid your host,
“ Have not so much, nay lighter, cause for boast.

LII.

- “ I speak these words to show that what whilere
“ I said and say again, has neither sprung
“ From evil heart, nor is the fruit of fear ;
“ But that true love and duty move my tongue.
“ You homeward with what haste you may to steer,
“ I counsel, your assembled bands among ;
“ For little is the wisdom of that wight ;
“ Who risks his own to gain another's right.

LIII.

- “ If there be gain, ye know. Late thirty-two,
“ Your vassal kings, with you our sails we spread ;
“ Now, if we pause to sum the account anew,
“ Hardly a third survives ; the rest are dead.
“ May it please Heaven no further loss ensue !
“ But if you will pursue your quest, I dread
“ Lest not a fourth nor fifth will soon remain ;
“ And wholly spent will be your wretched train.

LIV.

- “ Orlando's absence so far aids, that where
“ Our troops are few, there haply *none* would be ;
“ But not through this removed our perils are,
“ Though it prolongs our evil destiny.
“ Behold Rinaldo ! whom his deeds declare
“ No less than bold Orlando ; of his tree
“ There are the shoots ; with paladin and peer,
“ Our baffled Saracens' eternal fear ;

LV.

- “ And the other Mars (albeit against my heart
“ It goes to waste my praise upon a foe)⁶ ;
“ I speak of the redoubted Brandimart,
“ Whose feats no less than fierce Orlando's show ;
“ Whose mighty prowess I have proved in part,
“ In part, at others' cost I see and know.
“ Then many days Orlando has been gone ;
“ Yet we have lost more fields than we have won.

LVI.

- “ I fear, if heretofore our band has lost,
“ A heavier forfeit will henceforth be paid.
“ Blotted is Mandricardo from our host ;
“ Martial Gradasso hath withdrawn his aid ;
“ Marphisa, at our worst, has left her post ;
“ So Argier's lord ; of whom it may be said,
“ Were he as true as strong, we should not need
“ Gradasso and the Tartar king, to speed.

LVII.

- “ While aids like these are lost to our array,
“ While on our side such slaughtered thousands lie,
“ Those looked-for are arrived, nor on her way
“ Is any vessel fraught with new supply—
“ Charles has been joined by four, that, as they say,
“ Might with Orlando or Rinaldo vie ;
“ With reason, for from hence to Bactrian shore⁷,
“ Ill would you hope to find such other four.

LVIII.

- “ I know not if you know who Guido are,
“ Sansonet, and the sons of Olivier.
“ For these I more respect, more fear I bear,
“ Than any warlike duke or cavalier,
“ Of Almayn’s or of other lineage fair,
“ Who for the Roman empire rests the spear,
“ Though I misrate not those of newer stamp,
“ That, to our scathe, are gathered in their camp.

LIX.

- “ As often as ye issue on the plain,
“ Worsted so oft, or broken, shall you be.
“ If oft united Africa and Spain
“ Were losers, when sixteen to eight were we,
“ What will ensue, when banded with Almayn
“ Are England, Scotland, France, and Italy?
“ When with our six twice six their weapons cross,
“ What else can we expect but shame and loss?
-

LX.

- " You lose your people *here*, and *there* your reign,
" If you in this emprise are obstinate ;
" —Returning—us, the remnant of your train,
" You save, together with your royal state.
" It were ill done to leave the king of Spain,
" Since all for this would hold you sore ingrate ;
" Yet there's a remedy in peace ; which, so
" It pleases but yourself, will please the foe.

LXI.

- " But if, as first defeated, on your part
" It seems a shame to offer peace, and ye
" Have war and wasteful battle more at heart,
" Waged hitherto with what success you see,
" At least to gain the victory use art,
" Which may be yours, if you are ruled by me.
" Lay all your quarrel's trial on one peer,
" And let Rogero be that cavalier.

LXII.

- " Such our Rogero is, ye know and I,
" That—pitted one to one in listed fight—
" Not Roland, not Rinaldo stands more high,
" Nor whatsoever other Christian knight.
" But would ye kindle warfare far and nigh,
" Though superhuman be that champion's might,
" The warrior is but one mid many spears,
" Matched singly with a host of martial peers.

LXIII.

- " Meseemeth, if to you it seemeth good,
" Ye should propose to Charles the war to end;
" And that, to spare the constant waste of blood,
" Which his, and countless of your warriors spend,
" He—by a knight of yours to be withstood—
" A champion, chosen from his best should send;
" And those two all the warfare wage alone,
" Till one prevails, and one is overthrown;

LXIV.

- " On pact the king, whose champion in the just
" Is loser, tribute to that other pay.
" Nor will this pact displease King Charles, I trust,
" Though *his* was the advantage in the fray.
" Then of his arms Rogero so robust
" I deem, that he will surely win the day;
" Who would prevail (so certain is our right)
" Though Mars himself should be his opposite."

LXV.

With these and other sayings yet more sound,
So wrought Sobrino, he his end obtained;
And on that day interpreters were found,
And they that day to Charles their charge explained.
Charles, whom such matchless cavaliers surround,
Believes the battle is already gained;
And chooses good Rinaldo for the just,
Next to Orlando in his sovereign's trust.

LXVI.

In this accord like cause for pleasure find,
As well the Christian as the paynim foe :
For, harassed sore in body and in mind,
Those warriors all were weary, all were woe.
Each in repose and quietude designed
To pass what time remained to him below :
Each cursed the senseless anger and the hate
Which stirred their hearts to discord and debate.

LXVII.

Rinaldo felt himself much magnified,
That Charles, for what in him so strongly weighed,
More trusted him than all his court beside,
And glad the honoured enterprise assayed :
Roger he esteemed not in his pride,
And thought he ill could keep him from his blade.
Nor deemed the Child could equal him in fight,
Albeit he slew in strife the Tartar knight.

LXVIII.

Rogero, though much honoured, on his part,
That him his king has chosen from the rest,
To whom a trust so weighty to impart,
As of his many martial lords the best,
Yet shows a troubled face ; not that the heart
Of that good knight unworthy fears molest ;
Not only none Rinaldo would have bred ;
Him, with Orlando leagued, he would not dread—

LXIX.

But because sister of the Christian knight
(He knows) is she, his consort true and dear;
That to the stripling evermore did write,
As one sore injured by that cavalier.
Now, if to ancient sins he should unite
A mortal combat with Montalban's peer,
Her, although loving, will he anger so,
Not lightly she her hatred will forego.

LXX.

If silently Rogero made lament
That he in his despite must battle do;
In sobs his consort dear to hers gave vent,
When shortly to her ears the tidings flew.
She beat her breast, her golden tresses rent:
Fast, scalding tears her innocent cheeks bedew:
She taxes young Rogero as ingrate,
And aye cries out upon her cruel fate.

LXXI.

Nought can result to Bradamant but pain,
Whatever is the doubtful combat's end.
She will not think Rogero can be slain;
For this, 'twould seem, her very heart would rend;
And should our Lord the fall of France ordain,
That kingdom for more sins than one to shend,
The gentle maid, beside a brother's loss,
Would have to weep a worse and bitterer cross.

LXXII.

For, without shame and scorn, she never may,
Nor without hatred of her kin combined,
To her loved lord return in such a way
As that it may be known of all mankind;
As, thinking upon this by night and day,
She oftentimes had purposed in her mind;
And so by promise both were tied withal,
Room for repentance and retreat was small.

LXXIII.

But she, that ever, when things adverse were,
With faithful succour Bradamant had stayed,
I say the weird Melissa, could not bear
To hear the wailings of the woeful maid;
She hurried to console her in her care,
And proffered succour in due time and said,
'She would disturb that duel 'twixt the twain,
'The occasion of such grief and cruel pain.'

LXXIV.

Meanwhile their weapons for the future fray
Rogero and Duke Aymon's son prepared;
The choice whereof with that good warrior lay^s,
The Roman empire's knight by Charles declared;
And he, like one that ever from the day
He lost his goodly steed afoot had fared,
Made choice, afoot and fenced with plate and mail,
His foe with axe and dagger to assail.

LXXV.

Whether Chance moved Mountalban's martial lord,
Or Malagigi, provident and sage,
That knew how young Rogero's charmed sword
Cleft helm and hauberk in its greedy rage,
One and the other warrior made accord,
(As said) without their faulchions to engage.
The place of combat chosen by that twain
Was near old Arles, upon a spacious plain.

LXXVI.

Watchful Aurora hardly from the bower
Of old Tithonus hath put forth her head,
To give beginning to the day and hour
Prefixed and ordered for that duel dread,
When deputies from either hostile power,
On this side and on that forth issuing, spread
Tents at each entrance of the lists; and near
The two pavillions, both, an altar rear.

LXXVII.

After short pause, was seen upon the plain
The paynim host in different squadrons dight.
Rich in barbarick pomp, amid that train,
Rode Africk's monarch, ready armed for fight:
Bay was the steed he backed, with sable mane;
Two of his legs were pied, his forehead white.
Fast beside Agramant, Rogero came,
And him to serve Marsilius thought no shame.

LXXVIII.

The casque that he from Mandricardo wrung
In single combat with such travel sore,
The casque that (as in loftier strain is sung)
Cased Hector's head, a thousand years before,
Marsilius carried, by his side, among
Princes and lords, that severally bore
The other harness of Rogero bold,
Enriched with precious pearls and rough with gold.

LXXIX.

On the other part, without his camp appears
Charles, with his men at arms in squadrons dight;
Who in such order led his cavaliers,
As they would keep, if marshalled for the fight.
Fenced is the monarch with his famous peers,
And with him wends, all armed, Montalban's knight,
Armed, save his helmet, erst Mambrino's casque;
To carry which is Danish Ogier's task;

LXXX.

And, of two axes, hath Duke Namus one,
King Salamon the other: Charlemagne
Is to *this* side, with all his following, gone,
To *that* wend those of Africk and of Spain.
In the mid space between the hosts is none;
Empty remains large portion of the plain;
For he is doomed to death who thither goes,
By joint proclaim, except the chosen foes.

LXXXI.

After the second choice of arms was made,
By him, the champion of the paynim clan,
Thither two priests of either sect conveyed
Two books; *that*, carried by one holy man,
—Him of our law—Christ's perfect life displayed;
Those others' volume was their Alcoran.
The emperor in his hands the Gospel took,
The king of Africa that other book.

LXXXII.

Charlemagne, at his altar, to the sky
Lifted his hands, "O God, that for our sake
(Exclaimed the monarch) "wast content to die,
"Thyself a ransom for our sins to make;
"—O thou that found such favour in his eye,
"That God from thee the flesh of man did take,
"Borne for nine months within thy holy womb,
"While aye thy virgin flower preserved its bloom,

LXXXIII.

"Hear, and be witnesses of what I say,
"For me and those that after me shall reign.
"To Agramant and those that heir his sway,
"I twenty loads of gold of perfect grain
"Will every year deliver, if to-day
"My champion vanquished in the lists remain;
"And vow I will straightway from warfare cease,
"And from henceforth maintain perpetual peace;

LXXXIV.

“ And may your joint and fearful wrath descend
“ On me forthwith, if I my word forego !
“ And may it me and mine alone offend,
And none beside, amid this numerous show !
“ That all in briefest time may comprehend,
“ My breach of promise has brought down the woe.”
So saying, in his hand the holy book
Charles held; and fixed on heaven his earnest look.

LXXXV.

This done, they seek that altar, sumptuously
Decked for the purpose, by the pagan train;
Where their king swears, ‘ that he will pass the sea,
‘ With all his army, to his Moorish reign,
‘ And to King Charles will tributary be;
‘ If vanquished, young Rogero shall remain;
‘ And will observe the truce for evermore
‘ Upon the pact declared by Charles before;’

LXXXVI.

And like him, nor in under tone, he swears,
Calling on Mahound to attest his oath;
And on the volume which his pontiff bears,
To observe what he has promised plights his troth.
Then to his side each hastily repairs;
And mid their several powers are harboured both.
Next these, to swear arrive the champions twain;
And this the promise which their oaths contain.

LXXXVII.

Rogero pledges first his knightly word,
‘Should *his* king mar, or send to mar, the fray,
‘He him no more as leader or as lord
‘Will serve, but wholly Charlemagne obey.’
—Rinaldo—‘if in breach of their accord,
‘Him from the field King Charles would bear away,
‘Till one or the other is subdued in fight,
‘That he will be the Moorish monarch’s knight.’

LXXXVIII.

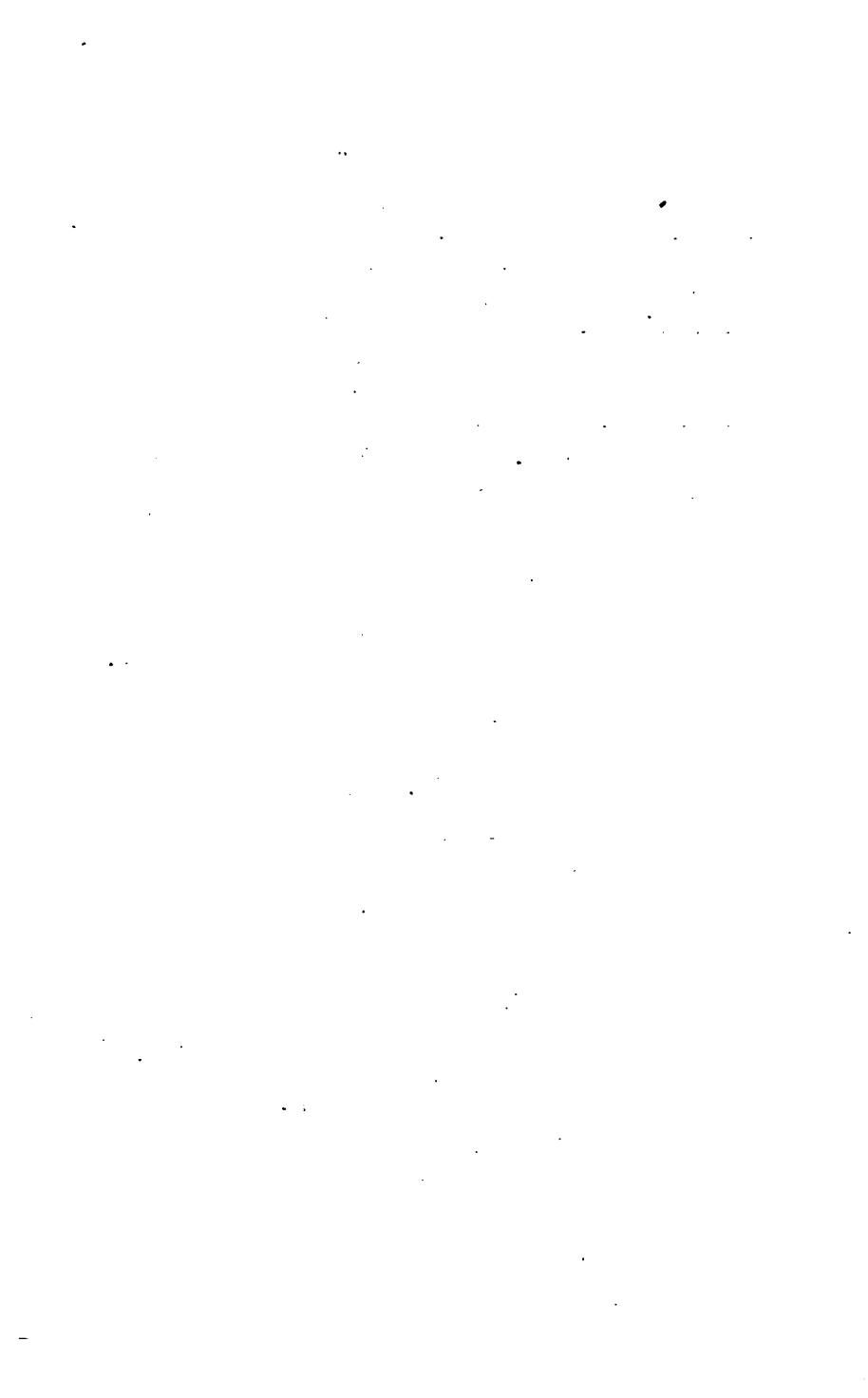
When ended are the ceremonies, here
And there, to seek their camps the two divide.
Nor long, therein delayed; when trumpets clear
The time for their encounter signified:
Now to the charge advanced each cavalier,
Measuring with cautious care his every stride.
Lo! the assault begins; now low, now high,
That pair the sounding steel in circles ply.

LXXXIX.

Now with the axe’s blade, now with its heel⁹
Their strokes they at the head or foot address;
And these so skilfully and nimbly deal,
As needs must shock all credence to express.
The Child, that at *her* brother aims the steel,
Who doth his miserable soul possess,
Evermore with such caution strikes his blow,
That he is deemed less vigorous than his foe.

XC.

Rather to parry than to smite intent,
He knew not what to wish; that low should lie
Rinaldo, would Rogero ill content,
Nor willingly the Child by him would die,
But here am I at my full line's extent,
Where I must needs defer my history.
In other canto shall the rest appear,
If you that other canto please to hear,



NOTES TO CANTO XXXVIII.

1.

At whom young Cupid roves.

Stanza iv. line 3.

“ Faire Venus’ son, that with thy cruel dart,
“ At that good knight so cunningly didst *rove*.”

SPENSER.

Rove is to shoot with roving arrows, or arrows shot out of the horizontal, in the language of archery; but in *that* of poetry, it often means simply to shoot with shafts.

2.

That with her in the cruel city were.

Stanza xxi. line 4.

In the city of the Amazons.

3.

Wherewith Astolpho, from the lowest star.

Stanza xxiii. line 7.

The moon. He has in another place termed her the lowest of the planets.

4.

Auster imprisoned in the skin remains.

Stanza xxx. line 8.

Here we have an imitation of the story of the *bag-wind* given to Ulysses in Homer;

5.

The stones beyond the use of nature grew.

Stanza xxxiii. line 6.

And here *that* of the animation of Deucalion's stones in Ovid.

6.

Albeit against my heart

It goes to waste my praise upon a foe.

Stanza lv. lines 1 and 2.

— “quis enim laudaverit hostem.”

OVID.

7.

Bactrian shore.

Stanza lvii. line 7.

“Bactros—now Dähesh—a river on the borders of Asiatic Scythia, from which Bactriana derives its name.”—CLASSICAL DICTIONARY.

8.

The choice whereof with that good warrior lay.

Stanza lxxiv. line 3.

As the person challenged; but it seems, from another passage, that the selection of the weapons chosen lay afterwards with the challenger.

9.

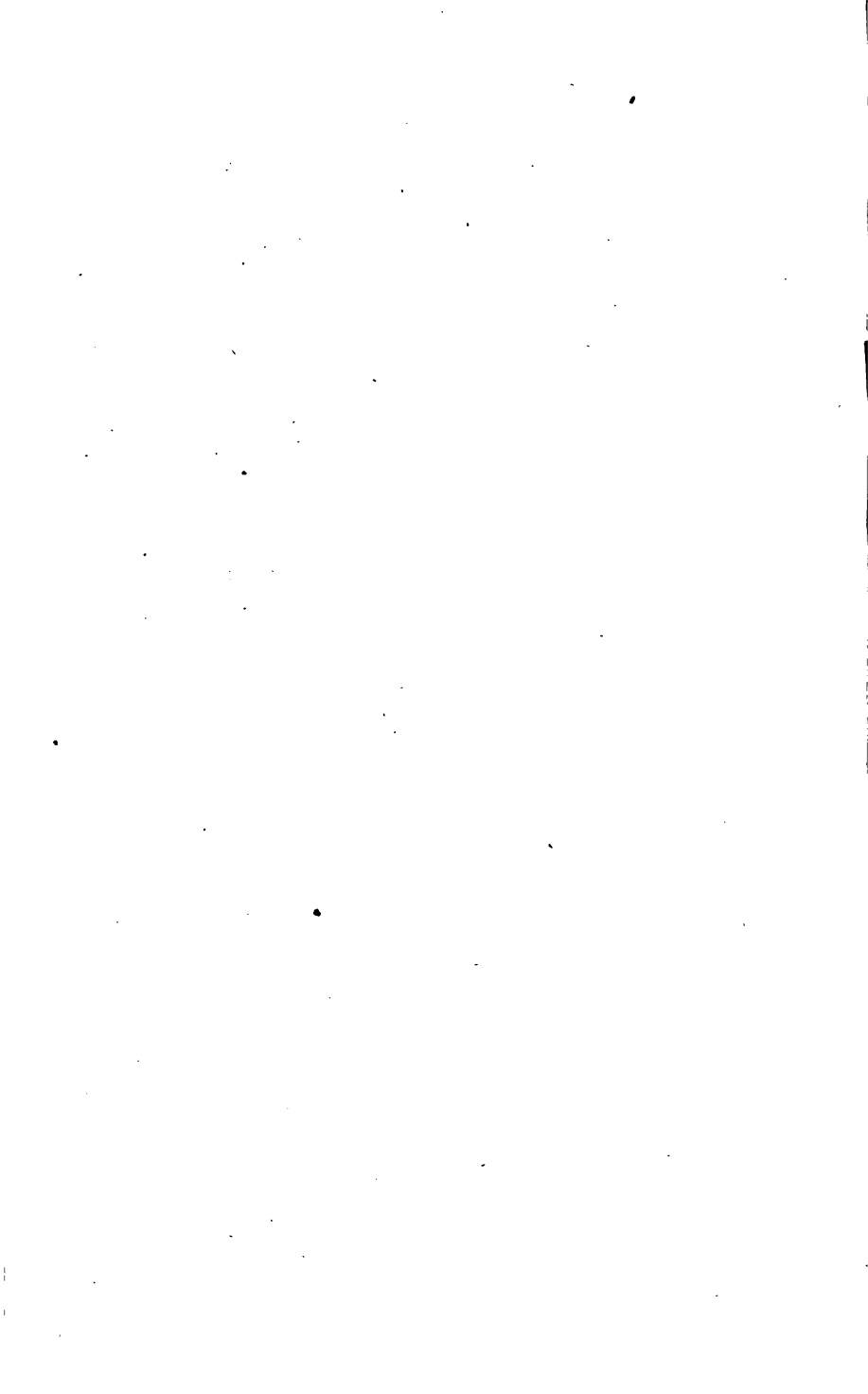
Now with the axe's blade, now with its heel, &c.

Stanza lxxxix. line 1.

Or innauzi col calce or col martello, etc.

The part of the scythe which corresponds with the reverse of the axe is termed *the heel*.

. The marvels in this canto, the animation of the stones, and the imprisonment of the wind, seem to be hardly worth stealing, considering the small profit which is made of the thefts: but Harrington considers them as doctrinal; observing, that "in the miracles done by Astolpho, is meant allegorically, that a man, guided by virtue and assisted by grace, makes all kinde of creatures to serve his turne."



THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO XXXIX.

ARGUMENT.

*Agramant breaks the pact, is overthrown,
And forced fair France for Afric to forego.
Meanwhile Astolpho in Biserta's town
Having with numerous host besieged the foe,
By hazard there arrives bold Milo's son,
To whom the duke, instructed how to do,
Restores his wits. At sea does Dudon meet
King Agramant, and sore annoys his fleet.*

THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO XXXIX.

I.

THAN that fell woe which on Rogero weighs
Harder, and bitterer pain forsooth is none,
Which upon flesh and more on spirit preys :
For of two deaths there is no scaping one.
Him, if in strife o'erlaid, Rinaldo slays,
Bradamant, if Rinaldo is outdone :
For if he killed her brother, well he knew
Her hate, than death more hateful, would ensue.

II.

Rinaldo, unimpeded by such thought,
Strove in all ways Rogero to o'erthrow ;
Fierce and despiteous whirled his axe, and sought
Now in the arms, now head, to wound the foe.
Rogero circled here and there, and caught
Upon his weapon's shaft the coming blow ;
And, if he ever smote, aye strove to smite
Where he should injure least Montalban's knight.

III.

To most of them that led the paynim bands,
But too unequal seemed the fierce assay.
Too slowly young Rogero plied his hands ;
Too well Rinaldo kept the Child at bay.
With troubled face the king of Afric stands :
He sighed, and breathless gazed upon the fray ;
And all the blame of that ill counsel flung
On King Sobrino's head, from whom it sprung.

IV.

Meanwhile the weird Melissa ¹, she—the font
Of all that wizards or enchanters know—
Had by her art transformed her female front,
And taken Argier's mighty shape ; in show
And gesture she appeared as Rodomont,
And seemed, like him, in dragon's hide to go :
Such was her belted sword and such her shield ;
Nor aught was wanting which he wore afield.

V.

She towards Troyano's mournful son did guide,
In form of courser, a familiar sprite,
And with a troubled visage loudly cried,
“ My liege, this is too foul an oversight,
“ A stripling boy in peril yet untried,
“ Against a Gaul, so stout and famed in fight,
“ Your champion in so fierce a strife to make ;
“ Where Afric's realm and honour are at stake.

VI.

"Let not this battle be pursued, my lord,
"In that 'twould cost our Moorish cause too dear.
"Let sin of broken faith and forfeit word
"Fall upon Rodomont! take thou no fear!
"Let each now show the metal of his sword,
"Each for a hundred stands when I am here."
So upon Agramant this counsel wrought,
That king pressed forward without further thought.

VII.

He, thinking that the monarch of Algiers
Is with him, of the pact has little care;
And would not rate a thousand cavaliers
So high, if banded in his aid they were.
Hence steeds reined-in and spurred, hence levelled
spears
Are seen in one short instant here and there.
Melissa, when the hosts are mixed in fight
By her false phantoms, vanishes from sight.

VIII.

The champions two, that, against all accord,
Against all faith, disturbed their duel see,
No longer strive in fight, but pledge their word
—Yea, put aside all hostile injury—
That they, on neither part, will draw the sword,
Until they better certified shall be
Who broke the pact, established by that twain,
Young Agramant, or aged Charlemagne.

IX.

They swear anew, ' the king who had o'erthrown
' That truce, and broken faith, as foe to treat.'
The field of combat is turned upside down;
Some hurry to the charge, and some retreat.
Who most deserved disgrace, who most renown,
Was seen, on both hands, in the selfsame feat;
All ran alike: but, 'mid that wild affray,
These ran to meet the foe, those ran away.

X.

As greyhound in the slip, that the fleet hare
Scowering about and circling him discerns,
Nor with the other dogs a part can bear
(For him the hunter holds), with anger burns;
Torments himself and mourns in his despair,
And whines, and strives against the leash, by turns;
Such till that moment had the fury been
Of Aymon's daughter and the martial queen.

XI.

They till that hour upon the spacious plain,
Had watched so rich a prize throughout the day;
And, as obliged by treaty to refrain
From laying hands upon the costly prey,
Had sore lamented and had grieved in vain,
Gazing with longing eyes on that array.
Now seeing truce and treaty broke, among
The Moorish squadrons they rejoicing sprung.

XII.

Marphisa piercing her first victim's breast,
(Two yards beyond his back the lance did pass)
In briefer time than 'tis by me exprest,
Broke with her sword four helms which flew like glass;
No less did Bradamant upon the rest;
But them her spear reduced to other pass.
All touched by that gold lance she overthrew;
Doubling Marphisa's score; yet none she slew^a.

XIII.

They witness to each others' exploits are,
(Those maids to one another are so near)
Then, whither fury drives, the martial pair,
Dividing, through the Moorish ranks career.
Who could each several warrior's name declare,
Stretched on the champaign by that golden spear?
Or reckon every head Marphisa left
Divided by her horrid sword, or cleft?

XIV.

As when benigner winds more softly blow,
And Apennine his shaggy back lays bare^a,
Two turbid torrents with like fury flow,
Which, in their fall, two separate channels wear,
Uproot hard rocks, and mighty trees which grow
On their steep banks, and field and harvest bear
Into the vale, and seem as if they vied
Which should do mightiest damage on its side;

XV.

So those high-minded virgin warriors two,
Scowering the field in separate courses, made
Huge havock of the Moors; whom they pursue
One with couched lance, and one with lifted blade.
Hardly King Agramant his Africk crew
From flight, beneath his royal banners stayed:
In search of Rodomont, he vainly turned;
Nor tidings of the missing warrior learned.

XVI.

He at his exhortation (so he trowed)
Had broke the treaty made in solemn wise,
To witness which the gods were called aloud;
Who then so quickly vanished from his eyes:
Nor sees he King Sobrino; disavowed
By King Sobrino is the deed, who flies
To Arles, and deems that day some vengeance dread
Will fall on Agramant's devoted head.

XVII.

Marsilius too is fled into the town:
So has that monarch holy faith at heart.
'Tis hence, that feebly King Troyano's son
Resists the crew, that war on Charles's part,
Italians, English, Germans; of renown
Are all; and, scattered upon every part,
Are mixed the paladins, those barons bold,
Glittering like jewels on a cloth of gold;

XVIII.

And, with those peers, is more than one confest
As perfect as is earthly cavalier,
Guido the savage, that intrepid breast,
And those two famous sons of Olivier.
I will not now repeat what I exprest
Of that fierce, daring female twain whilere;
Who on the field so many Moors extend,
No number is there to the slain or end.

XIX.

But, putting this affray some while aside,
Without a pinnace will I pass the sea.
To them of France so fast I am not tied,
But that Astolpho should remembered be:
Of the grace given him by his holy guide
I told erewhile, and told (it seems to me)
Branzardo and the king of Algaziers
Against the duke had mustered all their spears.

XX.

Such as the monarchs could in haste engage,
Raked from all Africa, that host contained;
Whether of fitting or of feeble age:
Scarce from impressing women they refrained.
Resolved his thirst of vengeance to assuage,
Agramant twice his Africa had drained⁴.
Few people in the land were left, and they
A feeble and dispirited array.

XXI.

So proved they ; for the foe was scarce in view,
Before that levy broke in panic dread :
Like sheep, their quailing bands Astolpho slew,
Charging at his more martial squadrons' head ;
And with the slain filled all that champaign ; few
Into Biserta from the carnage fled.
A prisoner valiant Bucifar remained ;
The town in safety King Branzardo gained ;

XXII.

More grieved at Bucifaro's loss alone,
Than had he lost the rest in arms arrayed.
Wide and in want of ramparts is the town ;
And these could ill be raised without his aid.
While fain to ransom him, he thinks upon
The means, and stands afflicted and dismayed,
He recollects him how the paladin,
Dudon, has many a month his prisoner been.

XXIII.

Him under Monaco, upon the shore,
In his first passage, Sarza's monarch took.
Thenceforth had been a prisoner evermore
Dudon, who was derived of Danish stock.
The paladin against the royal Moor
Branzardo thought, in this distress, to truck ;
And knowing through sure spy, Astolpho led
The Nubians, to that chief the offer sped.

XXIV.

A paladin himself, Astolpho knows
He gladly ought a paladin to free ;
And when that case the Moorish envoy shows,
To King Branzardo's offer does agree.
Dudon from prison loosed, his thanks bestows ;
And whatsoe'er pertains to land or sea,
Bestirs him to accomplish, in accord
With his illustrious chief, the English lord.

XXV.

Astolpho leading such a countless band
As might have well seven Africas oppress,
And recollecting 'twas the saint's command,
Who upon him whilere imposed the quest,
That fair Provence and Aquamorta's strand
He from the reaving Saracen should wrest,
Made through his numerous host a second draught
Of such as least inapt for sea he thought ;

XXVI.

And filling next as full as they could be
His hands with many different sorts of leaves,
Plucked from palm, olive, bay and cedar tree^s,
Approached the shore, and cast them on the waves.
Oh blessed souls ! Oh great felicity !
O grace ! which rarely man from God receives ;
O strange and wondrous miracle, which sprung
Out of those leaves upon the waters flung !

XXVII.

They wax in number beyond all esteem ;
Becoming crooked and heavy, long, and wide.
Into hard timber turn and solid beam,
The slender veins that branch on either side :
Taper the masts ; and, moored in the salt stream,
All in a thought transformed to vessels, ride ;
And of as diverse qualities appear,
As are the plants, whereon they grew whilere.

XXVIII.

It was a miracle to see them grown
To galliot, galley, frigate, ship, and boat ;
Wondrous, that they with tackling of their own,
Are found as well as any barks afloat.
Nor lack there men to govern them, when blown
By blustering winds—from islands not remote—
Sardinia or Corsica, of every rate,
Pilot and patron, mariner and mate.

XXIX.

Twenty-six thousand were the troop that manned
Those ready barks of every sort and kind.
To Dudon's government, by sea or land
A leader sage, the navy was consigned ;
Which yet lay anchored off the Moorish strand,
Expecting a more favourable wind,
To put to sea ; when, freighted with a load
Of prisoners, lo ! a vessel made the road.

XXX.

She carried those, whom at the bridge of dread,
—On that so narrow place of battle met—
Rodomont took, as often has been said.
The valiant Olivier was of the set,
Orlando's kin, and, with them, prisoners led,
Were faithful Brandimart and Sansonet,
With more ; to tell whereof there is no need ;
Of German, Gascon, or Italian seed.

XXXI.

The patron, yet unweeting he should find
Foes in the port, here entered to unload ;
Having left Argier many miles behind,
Where he was minded to have made abode ;
Because a boisterous, overblowing, wind
Had driven his bark beyond her destined road ;
Deeming himself as safe and welcome guest,
As Progne, when she seeks her noisy nest.

XXXII.

But when, arrived, the imperial eagle spread,
And pards and golden lilies he descries,
With countenance as sicklied o'er by dread,
He stands, as one that in unwary guise,
Has chanced on fell and poisonous snake to tread⁶,
Which, in the grass, opprest with slumber lies ;
And, pale and startled, hastens to retire
From that ill reptile, swoln with bane and ire.

XXXIII.

But no retreat from peril is there here,
Nor can the patron keep his prisoners down :
Him thither Brandimart and Olivier,
Sansonet and those others drag, where known
And greeted are the friends with joyful cheer,
By England's duke and Danish Ogier's son* ;
Who read that he who brought them to that shore
Should for his pains be sentenced to the oar.

XXXIV.

King Otho's son † kind welcome did afford
Unto those Christian cavaliers, as said ;
Who—honoured at his hospitable board—
With arms and all things needful were purveyed.
His going, for their sake, the Danish lord
Deferred, who deemed his voyage well delayed,
To parley with those peers, though at the cost
Of one or two good days, in harbour lost.

XXXV.

Of Charles, and in what state, what order are
The affairs of France they gave advices true ;
Told where he best could disembark, and where
To most advantage of the Christian crew.
While so the cavaliers their news declare,
A noise is heard ; which ever louder grew,
Followed by such a fierce alarm withal,
As to more fears than one gave rise in all.

* Astolpho and Dudon.

† Astolpho.

XXXVI.

The duke Astolpho and the goodly throng,
That in discourse with him were occupied,
Armed in a moment, on their coursers sprung,
And hurried where the Nubians loudest cried;
And seeking wherefore that wide larum rung,
Now here, now there—those warlike lords espied
A savage man, and one so strong of hand,
Naked and sole he troubled all that band.

XXXVII.

The naked savage whirled a sapling round,
So hard, so heavy, and so strong of grain,
That every time the weapon went to ground,
Some warrior, more than maimed, oppress the plain.
Above a hundred dead are strewed around;
Nor more defence the routed bands maintain;
Save that a war of distant darts they try;
For there is none will wait the champion nigh.

XXXVIII.

Astolpho, Brandimart, the Danish knight,
Hastening towards that noise with Olivier,
Remain astounded at the wondrous might
And courage, which in that wild man appear.
When, posting thither on a palfry light,
Is seen a damsel, clad in sable gear.
To Brandimart in haste that lady goes,
And both her arms about the warrior throws.

XXXIX.

This was fair Flordelice, whose bosom so
Burned with the love of Monodantes' son *,
She, when she left him prisoner to his foe
At that streight bridge, had nigh distracted gone.
From France had she past hither—given to know—
By that proud paynim, who the deed had done,
' How Brandimart, with many cavaliers,
' Was prisoner in the city of Algiers.'

XL.

When now she for that harbour would have weighed,
An eastern vessel in Marseilles she found,
Which thither had an ancient knight conveyed :
Of Monodantes' household ; a long round
To seek his Brandimart that lord had made,
By sea, and upon many a distant ground.
For he, upon his way, had heard it told,
' How he in France should find the warrior bold.'

XLI.

She knowing old Bardino in that wight,
Bardino who from Monodantes' court
With little Brandimart had taken flight,
And reared his nursling in THE SYLVAN FORT⁷;
Then hearing what had thither brought the knight,
With her had made him loosen from the port;
Relating to that elder, by what chance
Brandimart had to Africk passed from France.

* Brandimart.

XLII.

As soon as landed, 'that Biserta lies
'Besieged by good Astolpho's band,' they hear;
'That Brandimart is with him in the emprise,'
They learn, but learn not as a matter clear.
Now in such haste to him the damsel flies,
When she beholds her faithful cavalier,
As plainly shows her joy; which woes o'erblown
Had made the mightiest she had ever known.

XLIII.

The gentle baron no less gladly eyed
His faithful and beloved consort's face;
Her whom he prized above all things beside;
And clipt and welcomed her with loving grace;
Nor his warm wishes would have satisfied
A first, a second, or a third embrace,
But that he spied Bardino, he that came
From France, together with that faithful dame.

XLIV.

He stretched his arms, and would embrace the knight;
And—wherefore he was come—would bid him say:
But was prevented by the sudden flight
Of the scared host, which fled in disarray,
Before the club of that mad, naked wight,
Who with the brandished sapling cleared his way.
Flordelice viewed the furious man in front;
And cried to Brandimart, "Behold the count!"

XLV.

At the same time, withal, Astolpho bold
That this was good Orlando plainly knew,
By signs, whereof those ancient saints had told,
In the earthly paradise, as tokens true.
None of those others, who the knight behold,
The courteous baron in the madman view;
That from long self-neglect, while wild he ran,
Had in his visage more of beast than man.

XLVI.

With breast and heart transfixed with pity, cried
Valiant Astolpho—bathed with many a tear—
Turning to Danish Dudon, at this side,
And afterwards to valiant Olivier;
“Behold Orlando!” Him awhile they eyed,
Straining their eyes and lids; then knew the peer;
And, seeing him in such a piteous plight,
Were filled with grief and wonder at the sight.

XLVII.

So grieve and so lament the greater part
Of those good warriors, that their eyes o'erflow.
“’Tis time (Astolpho cried) “to find some art
“To heal him, not indulge in useless woe;”
And from his courser sprang: bold Brandimart,
Olivier, Sansonet and Dudon so
All leap to ground, and all together make
At Roland, whom the warriors fain would take.

XLVIII.

Seeing the circle round about him grow,
Levels his club that furious paladin,
And makes fierce Dudon feel (who—couched below
His buckler—on the madman would break in)
How grievous is that staff's descending blow ;
And but that Olivier, Orlando's kin,
Broke in some sort its force, that stake accurst
Had shield and helmet, head and body burst.

XLIX.

It only burst the shield, and in such thunder
Broke on the casque, that Dudon prest the shore :
With that, Sir Sansonet cut clean asunder
The sapling, shorn of two cloth-yards and more,
So vigorous was that warrior's stroke, while under
His bosom, Brandimart girt Roland sore
With sinewy arms about his body flung ;
And to the champion's legs Astolpho clung.

L.

Orlando shook himself, and England's knight,
Ten paces off, reversed upon the ground ;
Yet loosed not Brandimart, who with more might
And better hold had clasped the madman round.
To Olivier, too forward in that fight,
He dealt so furious and so fell a wound,
With his clenched fist, that pale the marquis fell ;
And purple streams from eyes and nostrils well ;

LI.

And save his morion had been more than good,
Bold Olivier had breathed his last, who lies,
So battered with his fall, it seemed he wou'd
Bequeath his parting soul to paradise.
Astolpho and Dudon, that again upstood
(Albeit swoln were Dudon's face and eyes)
And Sansonet, who plied so well his sword,
All made together at Anglantes' lord.

LII.

Dudon Orlando from behind embraced,
And with his foot the furious peer would throw :
Astolpho and others seize his arms ; but waste
Their strength in all attempts to hold the foe.
He who has seen a bull, by mastiffs chased
That gore his bleeding ears, in fury lowe,
Dragging the dogs that bait him there and here,
Yet from their tusks unable to get clear ;

LIII.

Let him imagine, so Orlando drew
Astolpho and those banded knights along.
Meanwhile upstarted Oliviero, who
By that fell fistycuff on earth was flung ;
And, seeing they could ill by Roland do
That sought by good Astolpho and his throng,
He meditates, and compasses, a way
The frantic paladin on earth to lay.

LIV.

He many a hawser made them thither bring,
And running knots in them he quickly tied;
Which on the count's waist, arms, and legs, they fling;
And then, among themselves, the ends divide,
Conveyed to this or that amid the ring,
Compassing Roland upon every side.
The warriors thus Orlando flung parforce,
As farrier throws the struggling ox or horse.

LV.

As soon as down, they all upon him are,
And hands and feet more tightly they constrain:
He shakes himself, and plunges here and there;
But all his efforts for relief are vain.
Astolpho bade them hence the prisoner bear;
'For he would heal (he said) the warrior's brain.'
Shouldered by sturdy Dudon is the load,
And on the beach's furthest brink bestowed.

LVI.

Seven times Astolpho makes them wash the knight;
And seven times plunged beneath the brine he goes.
So that they cleanse away the scurf and blight,
Which to his stupid limbs and visage grows.
This done, with herbs, for that occasion dight,
They stop his mouth, wherewith he puffs and blows.
For, save his nostrils, would Astolpho leave
No passage whence the count might air receive.

LVII.

Valiant Astolpho had prepared the vase,
Wherein Orlando's senses were contained,
And to his nostrils in such mode conveys,
That, drawing-in his breath, the county drained
The mystic cup withal. Oh wondrous case!
The unsettled mind its ancient seat regained;
And, in its glorious reasonings, yet more clear
And lucid waxed his wisdom than whilere.

LVIII.

As one, that seems in troubled sleep to see
Abominable shapes, a horrid crew;
Monsters which are not, and which cannot be;
Or seems some strange, unlawful thing to do,
Yet marvels at himself, from slumber free,
When his recovered senses play him true;
So good Orlando, when he is made sound,
Remains yet full of wonder, and astound.

LIX.

Aldabelle's brother*, Monodantes' son*,
And him that on his brain such cure had wrought,
He wondering marked, but word he spake to none;
And when and how he was brought thither, thought.
He turned his restless eyes now up now down,
Nor where he was withal, imagined aught,
Marvelling why he there was naked cast,
And wherefore tethered, neck and heels, so fast.

* Oliviero and Brandimart.

LX.

Then said, as erst Silenus said—when seen,
And taken sleeping in the cave of yore—
SOLVITE ME⁹, with visage so serene,
With look so much less wayward than before,
That him they from his bonds delivered clean,
And raiment to the naked warrior bore;
All comforting their friend, with grief opprest
For that delusion which had him possess.

LXI.

When to his former self he was restored,
Of wiser and of manlier mind than e'er,
From love as well was freed the enamoured lord;
And she, so gentle deemed, so fair whilere,
And by renowned Orlando so adored,
Did but to him a worthless thing appear.
What he through love had lost, to reacquire
Was his whole study, was his whole desire.

LXII.

Meanwhile Bardino told to Brandimart,
‘ How Monodantes, his good sire, was dead,
‘ And, on his brother, Gigliantes’ part,
‘ To call him to his kingdom had he sped,
‘ As well as from those isles, which most apart
‘ From other lands, in eastern seas are spread,
‘ That prince’s fair inheritance; than which
‘ Was none more pleasant, populous, or rich.’

LXIII.

He said, mid many reasons which he prest,
‘ That home was sweet, and—were the warrior fain
‘ To taste that sweet—he ever would detest
‘ A wandering life ;’ and Brandimart again
Replies, ‘ Through all that war, he will not rest
‘ From serving Roland and King Charlemagne ;
‘ And after, if he lives to see its end,
‘ To his own matters better will attend.’

LXIV.

Upon the following day, for Provence steer
The shipping under Danish Dudon’s care ;
When with the duke retired Anglantés’ peer,
And heard that lord the warfare’s state declare :
Then prest with siege Biserta, far and near,
But let good England’s knight the honour wear
Of every vantage ; while Astolpho still
In all was guided by Orlando’s will.

LXV.

The order taken to attack the town
Of huge Biserta, when, and on what side ;
How, at the first assault, the walls are won,
And with Orlando who the palm divide,
Lament not that I now shall leave unshown,
Since for short time I lay my tale aside.
In the meanwhile, how fierce an overthrow
The Moors received in France, be pleased to know.

LXVI.

Well nigh abandoned was their royal lord
In his worst peril ; for to Arles again
Had gone, with many of the paynim horde,
The sage Sobrino and the king of Spain ;
Who, for they deemed the land unsafe, aboard
Their barks sought refuge, with a numerous train,
Barons and cavaliers, that served the Moor ;
Who moved by their example put from shore.

LXVII.

Yet royal Agramant the fight maintains ;
But when he can no longer make a stand,
Turns from the combat, and directly strains
For Arles, not far remote, upon the strand.
Him Rabican pursues, with flowing reins,
Whom Aymon's daughter drives with heel and hand.
Him would she slay, through whom so often crost,
That martial maid had her Rogero lost.

LXVIII.

Marphisa by the same desire was stirred,
Who had her thoughts on tardy vengeance placed,
For her dead sire ; and as she fiercely spurred,
Made her hot courser feel his rider's haste.
But neither martial maid, amid that herd
Of flying Moors, so well the monarch chased,
As to o'ertake him in his swift retreat,
First into Arles, and then aboard his fleet.

LXIX.

As two fair generous pards, that from some crag
Together dart, and stretch across the plain ;
When they perceive that vigorous goat or stag,
Their nimble quarry, is pursued in vain,
As if ashamed they in that chase did lag,
Return repentant and in high disdain :
So, with a sigh, return those damsels two,
When they the paynim king in safety view :

LXX.

Yet therefore halt not, but in fury go
Amid that crowd, which flies, possest with dread ;
Felling, now here, now there, at every blow,
Many that never more uprear their head.
To evil pass was brought the broken foe ;
For safety was not even for them that fled :
Since Agramant, a sure retreat to gain,
Bade shut the city-gate which faced the plain ;

LXXI.

And bade on Rhone break all the bridges down.
Unhappy people, ever held as cheap
—Weighed with the tyrant's want who wears a
crown—
As worthless herd of goats or silly sheep !
These in the sea, those in the river drown ;
And those with blood the thirsty fallows steep.
The Franks few prisoners made, and many slew ;
For ransom in that battle was for few.

LXXII.

Of the great multitude of either train,
Christened or paynim, killed in that last fight,
Though in unequal parts (for, of the slain,
By far more Saracens were killed in flight,
By hands of those redoubted damsels twain),
Signs even to this day remain in sight:
For, hard by Arles, where sleeps the lazy Rhone,
The plain with rising sepulchres is strown.

LXXIII.

Meanwhile his heavy ships of deepest draught
King Agramant had made put forth to sea,
Leaving some barks in port—his lightest craft—
For them that would aboard his navy flee:
He stays two days, while they the stragglers waft,
And, for the winds are wild and contrary,
On the third day, to sail he gives command,
In trust to make return to Africk's land.

LXXIV.

Royal Marsilius, in that fatal hour,
Fearing the costs will fall upon his Spain,
And that the clouds, which big with tempest lower,
In the end will burst upon his fields and grain,
Makes for Valentia; where he town and tower
Begins to fortify with mickle pain;
And for that war prepares, which after ends
In the destruction of himself and friends.

LXXV.

King Agramant his sails for Africk bent :
His barks ill-armed and almost empty go ;
Empty of men, but full of discontent,
In that three-fourths had perished by the foe.
As cruel some, as weak and proud some shent
Their king, and (as still happens in like woe)
All hate him privily ; but, for they fear
His fury, in his presence mute appear.

LXXVI.

Yet sometimes two or three their lips unclose,
—Some knot of friends, where each on each relies—
And their pent choler and their rage expose:
Yet Agramant beneath the illusion lies,
That each with love and pity overflows ;
And this befalls, because he still espies
False faces, hears but voices that applaud,
And nought but adulation, lies and fraud.

LXXVII.

Not in Biserta's port his host to land
Was the sage king of Africa's intent,
Who had sure news '*that shore by Nubia's band*
Was held,' but he so far above it meant
To steer his Moorish squadron, that the strand
Should not be steep or rugged for descent:
There would he disembark, and thence would aid
Forthwith his people, broken and dismaid.

LXXVIII.

But favoured not by his foul destiny.

Was that intention, provident and wise;
Which willed the fleet, from leaves of greenwood tree,
Produced upon the beach in wondrous guise,
That, bound for France, now ploughed the foaming sea,
Should meet the king at night; that from surprise
In that dark, dismal hour, amid his crew
Worse panic and disorder might ensue.

LXXIX.

Not yet to him have tidings been conveyed,

That squadrons of such force the billows plow:
Nor would he have believed in him who said,
'A hundred barks had sprung from one small bough;
And hence for Africa the king had weighed,
Not fearing to encounter hostile prow;
Nor has he watchmen in his tops to spy,
And make report of what they hence descry.

LXXX.

'Twas so those ships, by England's peer supplied

To Dudon, manned with good and armed crew,
Which see the Moorish fleet at eventide,
And that strange armament forthwith pursue,
Assailed them unawares, and, far and wide,
Among those barks their grappling-irons threw,
And linked by chains, to their opponents clung,
When known for Moors and foemen by their tongue.

LXXXI.

In bearing down, impelled by winds that blow
Propitious to the Danish chief's intent,
Those weighty ships so shocked the paynim foe,
That many vessels to the bottom went;
Then, taxing wits and hands, to work them woe,
Them with fire, sword, and stones the Christians shent;
Which on their ships in such wide ruin pour,
Like tempest never vext the sea before.

LXXXII.

Bold Dudon's men, to whom unwonted might
And daring was imparted from on high,
(Since the hour was come the paynims to requite
For more than one ill deed,) from far and nigh,
The Moors so pestilently gall and smite,
Agramant finds no shelter; from the sky
Above, thick clouds of whistling arrows strike;
Around gleam hook and hatchet, sword and pike.

LXXXIII.

The king hears huge and heavy stones descend,
From charged machine or thundering engine sent,
Which, falling, poop and prow and broadside rend,
Opening to ravening seas a mighty vent;
And more than all the furious fires offend,
Fires that are quickly kindled, slowly spent.
The wretched crews would fain that danger shun,
And ever into direr peril run.

LXXXIV.

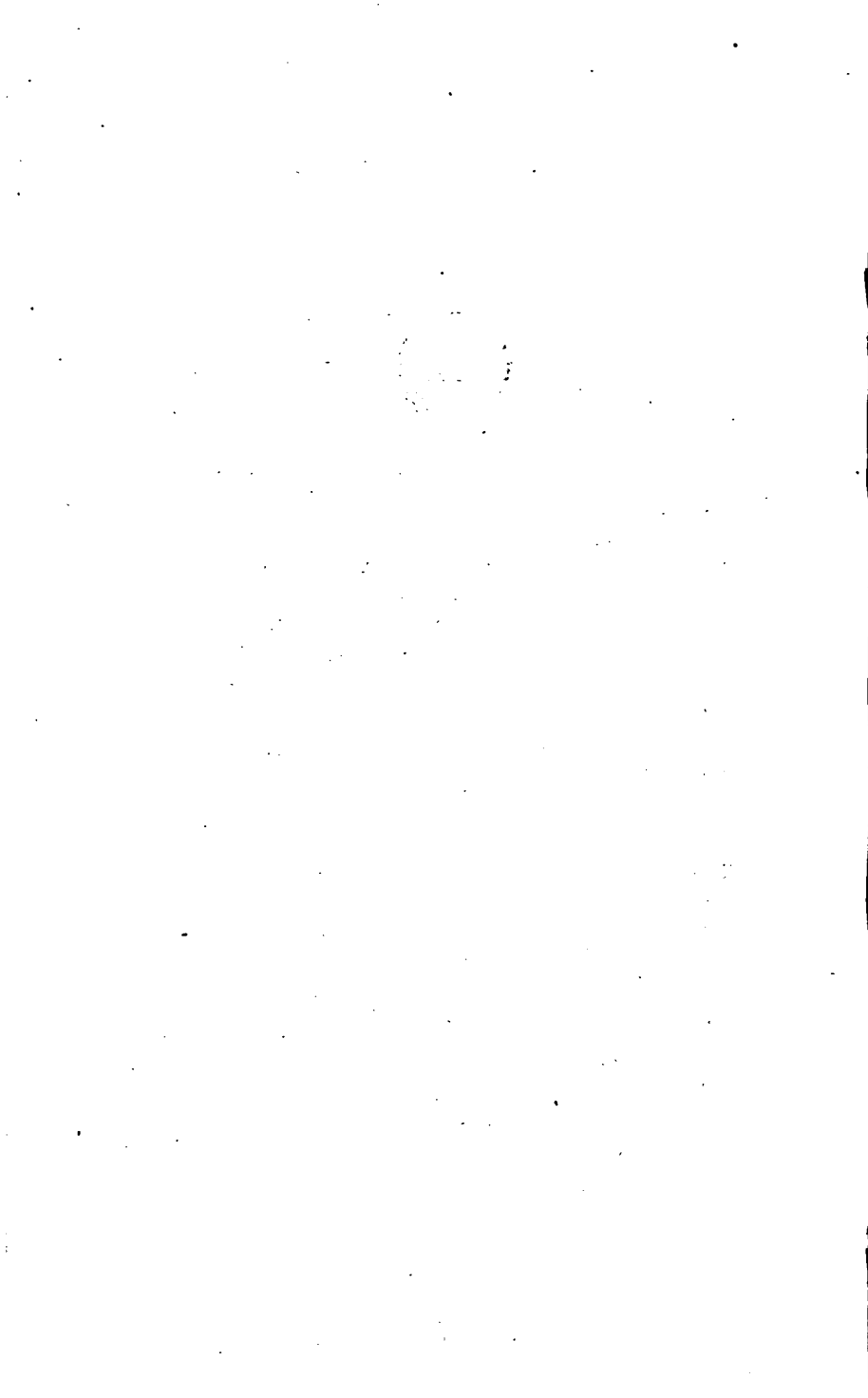
One headlong plunged, pursued by fire and sword,
And perished mid the waters, one who wrought
Faster with arms and feet, his passage oared
To other barque, already overfraught :
But she repulsed the wretch that fain would board ;
Whose hand, which too importunately sought
To clamber, grasped the side, while his lopt arm
And body stained the wave with life-blood warm.

LXXXV.

Him, that to save his life i' the waters thought,
Or, at the worst, to perish with less pain,
(Since swimming profited the caitiff nought,
And he perceived his strength and courage drain)
To the hungry fires from which he refuge sought,
The fear of drowning hurries back again :
He grasps a burning plank, and in the dread
Of dying either death, by both is sped.

LXXXVI.

This vainly to the sea resorts, whom spear
Or hatchet, brandished close at hand, dismay ;
For stone or arrow following in his rear,
Permit the craven to make little way.
But haply, while it yet delights your ear,
'Twere well and wisely done to end my lay,
Rather than harp upon the theme so long
As to annoy you with a tedious song.



NOTES TO CANTO XXXIX.

1.

Meanwhile the weird Melissa, &c.

Stanza iv. line 1.

The interruption, and indeed most of the circumstances, of the duel, are imitated from that between Turnus and Æneas.

2.

*All touched by that gold lance she overthrew ;
Doubling Marphisa's score ; yet none she slew.*

Stanza xii. lines 7 and 8.

These lines have been mistakenly rendered. The original says,

‘Tutti quei che toccò per terra mise ;
Due tanti fur, nè però alcuno uccise.’

The translator seems not to have known that “Due tanti fur” means simply *they were twice as many*, i. e. twice as many as those overthrown by Marphisa.

3.

And Apennine his shaggy back lays bare.

Stanza xiv. line 2.

On the melting of the snow.

4.

Agramant twice his Africa had drained.

Stanza xx. line 6.

This was his second invasion of France. The first is commemorated in the INNAMORATO.

5.

Plucked from palm, olive, bay and cedar tree.

Stanza xxvi. line 3.

A lauri, a cedri tolte, a olive, a palme.

The *lauro* is the bay, and not the laurel, as it is usually translated. The *alloro* is the laurel. I have been studious of precision in cases where precision may appear of little value, because the trees, flowers, &c. which flourish in Ariosto's poetry, are as likely as his colours to be mysterious and significant; and because, out of Tuscany, there is little exactitude in all such matters.

6.

*as one that in unwary guise,
Has chanced on fell and poisonous worm to tread.*

Stanza xxxii. lines 4 and 5.

*Improvisum aspris veluti qui sentibus anguem
Pressit humi, &c.*

VIRGIL.

7.

And reared his nursling in THE SYLVAN FORT.

Stanza xli. line 4.

See the INNAMORATO.

8.

Aldabelle's brother.

Stanza lix. line 1.

Aldabella was the sister of Oliviero, and the wife of Orlando, whom the authors of the *INNAMORATO* and the *FURIOSO*, for obvious reasons, seldom mention as a husband.

9.

SOLVITE ME.

Stanza lx. line 3.

This insulated piece of Latin seems very oddly introduced; but, in the learned age of Ariosto, it may have been more familiar to his readers, and had very likely acquired currency in conversation, as certain phrases, derived from the breviary, have at present. Such as: "*Annuncio vobis gaudium magnum*," which I have heard, even from a woman, as a proclamation to her guests of the servant's having told her that dinner was on the table.

THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO XL.

ARGUMENT.

*To fly the royal Agramant is fain,
And sees Biserta burning far away;
But landing finds the loyal Sericane,
Who of his faith gives goodly warrant; they
Defy Orlando, backed by champions twain;
Whom bold Gradasso firmly trusts to slay.
For seven kings' sake, fast prisoners to their foes,
Roger and the Dane exchange rude blows*

THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO XL.

I.

THE diverse chances of that sea-fight dread,
Here to rehearse would take a weary while;
And to discourse to you upon this head,
Great son of Hercules, were to Samos' isle
To carry earthen vessels, as 'tis said,
To Athens owls, and crocodiles to Nile.
In that, my lord, by what is vouched to me,
Such things you saw, such things made others see.

II.

Your faithful people gazed on a long show,
That night and day, wherein they crowded stood,
As in a theatre, and hemmed on Po
Twixt fire and sword, the hostile navies viewed.
What outcries may be heard, what sounds of woe,
How rivers may run red with human blood,
In suchlike combat, in how many a mode
Men die, you saw, and you to many showed.

III.

I saw not, I, who was compelled to course,
Evermore changing nags, six days before,
To Rome, in heat and haste, some helpful force
Of him our mighty pastor to implore.
But, after, need was none of foot or horse,
For so the lion's beak and claws you tore¹,
From that day unto this I hear not said
That he more trouble in your land has bred.

IV.

But Trotto, present at this victory,
Afranio, Moro, Albert, Hannibal,
Zerbinat, Bagno, the Ariostos three,
Assured me of the mighty feat withal,
Certified after by that ensignry,
Suspended from the holy temple's wall,
And fifteen galleys at our river-side,
Which with a thousand captive barks I spied.

V.

He that those wrecks and blazing fires discerned,
And such sore slaughter, under different shows,
Which—vengeing us for hall and palace burned—
While bark remained, raged wide among the foes,
Might also deem how Africk's people mourned,
With Agramant, mid diverse deaths and woes,
On that dark night, when the redouted Dane
Assaulted in mid sea the Moorish train.

VI.

'Twas night, nor gleam was anywhere descried,
When first the fleets in furious strife were blended;
But when lit sulphur, pitch and tar from side
And poop and prow into the sky ascended,
And the destructive wild-fire, scattered wide,
Fed upon ship and shallop ill defended,
The things about them all descried so clear
That night was changed to day, as 'twould appear.

VII.

Hence Agramant, that by the dark deceived,
Had rated not so high the foes' array,
Nor to encounter such a force believed,
But would, if 'twere opposed, at last give way,
When that wide darkness cleared, and he perceived
(What least he weened upon the first affray)
That twice as many were the ships he fought,
As his own Moorish barks, took other thought.

VIII.

Into a boat he with some few descends,
Brigliador and some precious things, to flee;
And so, twixt ship and ship, in silence wends,
Until he finds himself in safer sea,
Far from his own; whom fiery Dudon shends,
Reduced to sad and sore extremity;
Them steel destroys, fires burn, and waters drown;
While he, that mighty slaughter's cause, is flown.

IX.

Agramant flies, and with him old Sobrine,
Agramant grieving he had not believed,
What time that sage foresaw with eye divine,
And told the woe wherewith he is aggrieved.
But turn we to the valiant paladine,
Who, before other aid can be received,
Counsels the duke Biserta to destroy;
That it no more may Christian France annoy.

X.

And hence in public order was it said,
' The camp should to its arms the third day stand ;'
For this, it was with many barks bested ;
For all were placed not at the Dane's command.
That fleet the worthy Sansonetto led,
(As good a warrior he by sea as land)
Which a mile off the port, and overight
Biserta, now was anchored by the knight.

XI.

Orlando and the duke, like Christians true,
Which dare no danger without God for guide,
' That fast and prayer be made their army through,'
Ordain by proclamation to be cried ;
And that upon the third day, when they view
The signal, all shall bown them, far and wide,
Biserta's royal city to attack,
Which they, when taken, doom to fire and sack.

XII.

And so, when now devoutly have been done
Vigil and vow, and holy prayer and fast,
Kin, friends, and those to one another known,
Together feast; who, when with glad repast
Their wasted bodies were refreshed, begun
To embrace and weep; and acts and speeches past,
Upon the banquet's close, amid those crews
Such as best friends, about to sever, use.

XIII.

The holy priests within Biserta's wall,
Pray with their grieving people, and in tears,
Aye beat their bosoms, and for succour call
Upon their Mahomet, who nothing hears.
What vigils, offerings, and what gifts withal
Were promised silently, amid their fears!
What temples, statues, images were vowed,
In memory of their bitter woes, aloud!

XIV.

And, when the cadì hath his blessing said,
The people arms and to the rampart hies.
As yet reposing in her Tithon's bed
Aurora was, and dusky were the skies;
When to their posts, their several troops to head,
Here Sansonetto, there Astolpho flies.
And when they hear Orlando's signal blown
Assault with furious force Biserta's town.

XV.

Washed by the sea, upon two quarters, were
The city walls, two stood on the dry shore,
Of a construction excellent and rare,
Wherein was seen the work of days of yore :
Of other bulwarks was the town nigh bare ;
For since Branzardo there the sceptre bore ;
Few masons at command, and little space
That monarch had to fortify the place.

XVI.

The Nubian king is charged by England's peer,
With sling and arrow so the Moors to gall,
That none upon the works shall dare appear ;
And that, protected by the ceaseless fall
Of stone and dart, in safety cavalier
And footman may approach the very wall ;
Who loaded, some with plank, with rock-stone some,
And some with beam, or weightier burden, come.

XVII.

This and that other thing the Nubians bore,
And by degrees filled-up that channel wide,
Whose waters were cut off the day before,
So that in many parts the ooze was spied.
Filled is the ditch in haste from shore to shore,
And forms a level to the further side.
Cheering the footmen on the works to mount,
Stand Olivier, Astolpho, and the Count.

XVIII.

The Nubians upon hope of gain intent,
Impatient of delay, nor heeding how
With pressing perils they were compassed, went
Protected by the sheltering boar and sow^a.
With battering ram, and other instrument,
To break the gate and make the turret bow,
Speedily to the city wall they post,
Nor unprovided find the paynim host.

XIX.

For steel, and fire, and roof, and turret there,
In guise of tempest on the Nubians fell,
Which plank and beam from those dread engines tear,
Made for annoyance of the infidel.
In the ill beginning, and while dim the air,
Much injury the christened host befell;
But when the sun from his rich mansion breaks,
Fortune the faction of the Moor forsakes.

XX.

The assault is reinforced on every side,
By Count Orlando, both by sea and land:
The fleet, with Sansonetto for its guide,
Entered the harbour, and approached the strand;
And sorely they with various engines plied,
With arrows and with slings, the paynim band;
And sent the assailants scaling-ladder, spear,
And naval stores, and every needful gear.

XXI.

Orlando, Oliviero, Brandimart,

And he, in air so daring heretofore *,
Do fierce and furious battle on that part,
Which lies the furthest inland from the shore :
Each leads a portion of those Æthiops swart,
Ordered in equal bands beneath the four,
Who at the walls, the gateways, or elsewhere,
All give of prowess shining proofs and rare.

XXII.

So better could be seen each warrior's claim,
Than if confused in combat there and here.
Who of reward is worthy, who of shame,
To a thousand and to watchful eyes is clear.
Dragged upon wheels are towers of wooden frame,
And others well-trained elephants uprear,
Which so o'ertop the turrets of the foe,
Those bulwarks stand a mighty space below.

XXIII.

Brandimart to the walls a ladder brought,
Climbed, and to climb withal to others cried :
Many succeed, with bold assurance fraught,
For none can fear beneath so good a guide :
Nor was there one who marked, nor one who thought
Of marking, if such weight it would abide.
Brandimart only, on the foes intent,
Clambered and fought, and grasped a battlement.

* Astolpho.

XXIV.

Here clang with hand and foot the daring knight,
Sprang on the embattled wall, and whirled his sword;
And, showing mickle tokens of his might,
The paynims charged, o'erthrew, hewed-down and
gored :

But all at once, o'erburthened with that weight,
The ladder breaks beneath the assailing horde ;
And, saving Brandimart, the Christians all
Into the ditch with headlong ruin fall.

XXV.

Not therefore blenched the valiant cavalier,
Nor thought he of retreat, albeit was none
Of his own band that followed in his rear ;
Although he was a mark for all the town.
Of many prayed, the warrior would not hear
The prayer to turn ; but mid the foes leapt down ;
I say, into the city took a leap,
Where the town-wall was thirty cubits deep.

XXVI.

He, without any harm on the hard ground,
As if on feathers or on straw, did light ;
And, like cloth shred and shorn, the paynims round
In fury shreds and shears the valiant knight.
Now springs on these, now those, with vigorous bound ;
And these and those betake themselves to flight.
They that without have seen the leap he made,
Too late to save him deem all human aid.

XXVII.

Throughout the squadrons a deep rumour flew,
A murmur and a whisper, there and here,
From mouth to mouth; the Fame by motion grew,
And told and magnified the tale of fear:
For upon many quarters stormed that crew,
Where good Orlando was, where Olivier,
Where Otho's son *, she flew on pinions light,
Nor ever paused upon her nimble flight.

XXVIII.

Those warriors, and Orlando most of all,
Who love and prize the gentle Brandimart,
Hearing, should they delay upon that call,
They would from so renowned a comrade part,
Their scaling-ladders plant, and mount the wall
With rivalry, which shows the kingly heart;
Who carry all such terror in their look,
That, at the very sight, their foemen shook.

XXIX.

As on loud ocean, lashed by boisterous gale
The billows the rash bark assault, and still—
Now threatening poop, now threatening prow—assail,
And, in their rage and fury, fain would fill;
The pilot sighs and groans, dismaid and pale,
—He that should aid, and has not heart or skill—
At length a surge the pinnace sweeps and swallows,
And wave on wave in long succession follows;

* Astolpho.

XXX.

Thus when those win the wall, they leave a space
So wide, that who beneath their conduct go,
Safely may follow them; for at its base,
A thousand ladders have been reared below.
Meanwhile the battering rams, in many a place,
Have breached that wall, and with such mighty blow,
The bold assailants can, from many a part,
Bear succour to the gallant Brandimart.

XXXI.

Even with that rage wherewith the stream that reigns,
The king of rivers³—when he breaks his mound,
And makes himself a way through Mantuan plains—
The greasy furrows and glad harvests, round,
And, with the sheepcotes, flock, and dogs and swains
Bears off, in his o'erwhelming waters drowned;
Over the elm's high top the fishes glide,
Where fowls erewhile their nimble pinions plied;

XXXII.

Even with that rage rushed in the impetuous band,
Where many breaches in the wall were wrought,
To slay with burning torch and trenchant brand,
That people, which to evil pass were brought.
Murder and rapine there, and violent hand
Dipt deep in blood and plunder, in a thought,
Destroy that sumptuous and triumphant town,
Which of all Africk wore the royal crown.

XXXIII.

Filled with dead bodies of the paynim horde,
Blood issued from so many a gaping wound,
A fouler fosse was formed and worse to ford
Than girdles the infernal city round^t.
From house to house the fire in fury poured;
Mosque, portico, and palace, went to ground;
And spoiled and empty mansions with the clang,
Of beaten breast, and groan and outcry rang.

XXXIV.

The victors, laden with their mighty prey,
From that unhappy city's gates are gone,
One with fair vase, and one with rich array,
Or silver plate from ancient altar won.
The mother this, that bore the child away;
Rapes and a thousand evil things were done.
Of much, and what they cannot hinder, hear
Renowned Orlando and fair England's peer.

XXXV.

By Olivier, amid that slaughter wide,
Fell Bucifaro of the paynim band;
And—every hope and comfort cast aside—
Branzardo slew himself with his own brand;
Pierced with three wounds whereof he shortly died,
Folvo was taken by Astolpho's hand;
The monarchs three, intrusted to whose care
Agramant's African dominions were.

XXXVI.

Agramant, who had left without a guide
His fleet this while, and with Sobrino fled,
Wept over his Biserta when he spied
Those fires that on the royal city fed.
When nearer now the king was certified,
How in that cruel strife his town had sped,
He thought of dying, and himself had slain,
But that Sobrino's words his arm restrain.

XXXVII.

“ What victory, my lord, (Sobrino cries)
“ Could better than thy death the Christian cheer,
“ Whence he might hope to joy in quiet wise
“ Fair Africa, from all annoyance clear?
“ Thy being yet alive this hope denies;
“ Hence shall he evermore have cause for fear.
“ For well the foeman knows, save thou art gone,
“ He for short time will fill thine Africk throne.

XXXVIII.

“ Thy subjects by thy death deprived will be
“ Of hope, the only good they have in store,
“ Thou, if thou liv'st, I trust, shalt set us free,
“ Redeem from trouble, and to joy restore.
“ Captives for ever, if thou diest, are we;
“ Africk is tributary evermore.
“ Although not for thyself, yet not to give
“ My liege, annoyance to thy followers, live.

XXXIX.

“ The soldan, he thy neighbour, will be won,
“ Surely with men and money thee to aid :
“ By him with evil eye King Pepin’s son,
“ So strong in Africa, will be surveyed.
“ All efforts to restore thee to thy throne
“ By Norandine, thy kinsman, will be made.
“ Turk, Persian and Armenian, Arab, Mede,
“ If prayed, will all assist thee in thy need.”

XL.

In such and such like words, with wary art,
With hope of quickly winning back his reign,
Sobrinò soothed the king, while in his heart
He other thought perchance did entertain.
Well knows he to what pass, what evil mart
That lord is brought; how often sighs in vain,
Whoe’er foregoes the sceptre which he swayed,
And to barbarians hath recourse for aid.

XLI.

Jugurtha, martial Hannibal, and more
In ancient times, good proof of this afford :
In our own era, Lewis, hight the Moor,
Delivered into other Lewis’ ward^b.
Your brother, Duke Alphonso, wiser lore
Learned from their fate;—I speak to you, my lord—
Wont them as very madmen to decry,
That more on others than themselves rely;

XLII.

And therefore aye, throughout that warfare drear
Waged by the pontiff, in his fierce disdain,
Albeit upon his feeble powers the peer
Could ill depend, though from Italian plain
Was driven the friend that aided him whilere,
And by the foe possessed was Naples' reign,
He against menace, against promise steeled,
Ne'er to another would his dukedom yield.

XLIII.

Eastward King Agramant had turned his prow;
And seaward steered his bark, of Africk wide;
When from the land a wicked wind 'gan blow,
And took the reeling vessel on one side:
The master, seated at the helm, his brow
Raised towards heaven, and to the monarch cried;
" I see so fell and fierce a tempest form,
" Our pinnacle cannot face the pelting storm.

XLIV.

" If you, my lords, will listen to my lore,
" An isle is on our left-hand; and to me
" It seems that it were well to make that shore
" Till overblown the tempest's fury be."
To his advice assents the royal Moor,
And makes the larboard land, from peril free;
Which, for the sailor's weal, when tempests rise,
"Twixt Vulcan's lofty forge and Africk lies^c.

XLV.

With juniper and myrtle overgrown,
Of habitations is that islet bare;
A pleasing solitude; and where alone
Harbour wild stag and roebuck, deer and hare;
And, save to fishermen, is little known,
That oftentimes on the shorn brambles there
Hang their moist nets; meanwhile, untroubled sleep
The scaly fishes in their quiet deep.

XLVI.

Here other vessel, sheltered from the main,
They found, by tempest tost upon that land,
Which had conveyed the king of Sericane
Erewhile from Arles; on one and the other hand,
In reverent wise and worthy of the twain,
Those valiant kings embraced upon the strand:
For friends the monarchs were, and late before
The walls of Paris, arms together bore.

XLVII.

With much displeasure Sericana's knight
Heard by King Agramant his griefs displaid;
Then him consoled, and in his cause to fight,
Like courteous king, the kindly offer made:
But brooked not, that to Egypt's people, light
And lacking faith, he should resort for aid.
" That thither it is perilous to wend,
" Exiles (he said) are warned by Pompey's end.

XLVIII.

- “ And for Senapus’ Æthiopian crew
“ Have come beneath Astolpho, as ye show,
“ To wrest your fruitful Africa from you,
“ And burnt and laid her chiefest city low.
“ And with their squadrons is Orlando, who
“ Was wandering void of wit, short while ago,
“ The fittest cure for all, whereby to scape
“ Out of this trouble I, meseems, can shape.

XLIX.

- “ I, for your love, will undertake the quest;
“ The Count in single combat to appeal;
“ He vainly would, I wot, with me contest,
“ If wholly made of copper or of steel.
“ I rate the christian church, were he at rest,
“ As wolf rates lambs, when hungering for his meal.
“ Next have I thought how of the Nubian band
“ —A brief and easy task—to free your land.

L.

- “ I will make other Nubians, they that hold
“ Another faith, divided by Nile’s course,
“ And Arabs and Macrobian (rich in gold
“ And men are *these*, and *those* in herds of horse),
“ Chaldean, Perse, and many more, controlled
“ By my good sceptre, in such mighty force,
“ Will make them war upon the Nubians’ reign,
“ Those reavers shall not in your land remain.”

LI.

Gradasso's second offer seemed to be
Most opportune to King Troyano's son;
And much he blest the chances of the sea,
Which him upon that desert isle had thrown:
Yet would not upon any pact agree,
—Nay, not to repossess Biserta's town—
Gradasso should for him in fight contend;
Deeming too sore his honour 'twould offend.

LII.

“ If Roland is to be defied, more due
“ The battle is to me (that king replies)
“ I am prepared for it; and let God do
“ His will by me, in good or evil wise.”
“ —Follow my mode; another mode and new,
“ Which comes into my mind (Gradasso cries),
“ Let both of us together wage this fight
“ Against Orlando and another knight.”

LIII.

“ So not left out, I care not, if I be
“ The first or last (said Agramant): I know
“ In arms no better can I find than thee,
“ Though I should seek a comrade, high or low.
“ And what (Sobrino cried) becomes of me?
“ I should be more expert if old in show;
“ And evermore in peril it is good,
“ Force should have Counsel in his neighbourhood.”

LIV.

Stricken in years, yet vigorous was the sage,
And well had proved himself with sword and spear;
And said, 'he found himself in gray old age,
'Such as in green and supple youth whilere.'
They own his claim, and for an embassy
Forthwith a courier find, then bid him 'steer
'For Africa, where camped the Christians lie,
'And Count Orlando on their part defy;

LV.

'With equal number of armed knights to be,
'Matching his foes, on Lampedosa's shore;
'Where on all quarters that circumfluent sea,
'By which they are inisled, is heard to roar?'
The paynim messenger unceasingly,
Like one in needful haste, used sail and oar,
Till he found Roland in Biserta, where
The host beneath his eye their plunder share.

LVI.

From those three monarchs to the cavalier
The invitation was in public told;
So pleasing to Anglante's valiant peer,
To the herald he was liberal of his gold:
From his companions had he heard whilere
That Durindane was in Gradasso's hold:
Hence, to retrieve that faulchion from the foe,
To India had the Count resolved to go:

LVII.

Deeming he should not find that king elsewhere,
Who, so he heard, had sailed from the French shore.
A nearer place is offered now; and there
He hopes Gradasso shall his prize restore;
Moved also by Almontes' bugle rare,
To accept the challenge which the herald bore;
Nor less by Brigliadoro; since he knew
In Agramant's possession were the two.

LVIII.

He chose for his companions in the fight
The faithful Brandimart and Olivier:
Well has he proved the one and the other's might;
Knows he alike to both is passing dear.
Good horses and good armour seeks the knight
And goodly swords and lances, far and near,
For him and his; meseems to you is known
How none of those three warriors had his own.

LIX.

Orlando (as I oft have certified)
In fury, *his* had scattered wide and far;
Rodomont took the others', which beside
The river, locked in that high turret are.
Few throughout Africa could they provide;
As well because to France, in that long war,
King Agramant had born away the best,
As because Africa but few possest.

LX.

What could be had of armour, rusted o'er
And brown with age, Orlando bids unite;
Meanwhile with his companions on the shore,
He walks, discoursing on the future fight.
So wandering from their camp three miles and more,
It chanced that, turning towards the sea their sight,
Under full sail approaching, they descried
A helmless barque, with nought her course to guide.

LXI.

She, without pilot, without crew, alone,
As wind and fortune ordered it, was bound:
The vessel neared the shore, with sails full-blown,
Furrowing the waves, until she took the ground.
But ere of these three warriors more be shown,
The love wherewith I to the Child am bound,
To his story brings me back, and bids record
What past 'twixt him and Clermont's warlike lord.

LXII.

I spake of that good pair of warriors, who
Had both retreated from the martial fray,
Beholding pact and treaty broken through,
And every troop and band in disarray.
Which leader to his oath was first untrue,
And was occasion of such evil, they
Study to learn of all the passing train;
King Agramant or the Emperor Charlemagne.

LXIII.

Meanwhile a servant of the Child's, at hand,
—Faithful, expert and wary was the wight,
Nor in the shock of either furious band,
Had ever of his warlike lord lost sight—
To bold Rogero bore his horse and brand,
That he might aid his comrades now in flight.
Rogero backed the steed and grasped the sword;
But not in battle mixed that martial lord.

LXIV.

Thence he departed; but he first renewed
His compact with Montalban's knight—that so
His Agramant convinced of perjury stood—
Him and his evil sect he would forego.
That day no further feats of hardihood
Rogero will perform against the foe:
He but demands of all that make for Arles,
'Who first broke faith, King Agramant or Charles?'

LXV.

From all he hears repeated, far and near,
That Agramant had broke the promise plight:
He loves that king, and from his side to veer,
For this, believes would be no error light.
The Moors were broke and scattered (this whilere
Has been rehearsed) and from the giddy height
Of HER revolving wheel were downward hurled,
Who at her pleasure rolls this nether world.

LXVI.

Rogero ponders if he should remain,
Or rather should his sovereign lord attend :
Love for his lady fits him with a rein
And bit, which lets him not to Africk wend ;
Wheels him, and to a counter course again
Spurs him, and threats his restive mood to shend,
Save he maintains the treaty, and the troth
Pledged to the paladin with solemn oath.

LXVII.

A wakeful, stinging care, on the other side
Scourges and goads no less the cavalier ;
Lest, if he now from Agramant divide,
He should be taxed with baseness or with fear.
If many deem it *well* he should abide,
To many and many it would *ill* appear :
Many would say, that oaths unbinding are,
Which 'tis unlawful and unjust to swear.

LXVIII.

He all that day and the ensuing night
Remains alone, and so the following day ;
Forever sifting in his doubtful sprite,
If it be better to depart or stay :
Lastly for Agramant decides the knight ;
To him in Africk will he wend his way :
Moved by his love for his liege-lady sore,
But moved by honour and by duty more.

LXIX.

He made for Arles, where yet he hoped would ride
The fleet which him to Africa might bear;
Nor in the port nor offing ships espied,
Nor Saracens save dead beheld he there.
For Agramant had swept the roadstead wide,
And burnt what vessels in the haven were.
Rogero takes the road, when this hope fails,
Along the sea-beat shore toward Marseilles.

LXX.

Upon some boat he hoped to lay his hand,
Which him for love or force should thence convey.
Already Ogier's son had made the land,
With the barbarians' fleet, his captive prey.
You could not there have cast a grain of sand
Between those vessels; moored closely lay
The mighty squadrons to that harbour brought,
With conquerors these, and those with prisoners
fraught.

LXXI.

The vessels of the Moor that were not made
The food of fire and water on that night
(Saving some few that fled) were all conveyed
Safe to Marseilles by the victorious knight.
Seven of those kings, that Moorish sceptres swayed,
Who, having seen their squadron put to flight,
With their seven ships had yielded to the foe,
Stood mute and weeping, overwhelmed with woe.

LXXII.

Dudon had issued forth upon dry land,
Bent to find Charlemagne that very day;
And of the Moorish spoil and captive band
Made in triumphal pomp a long display.
The prisoners all were ranged upon the strand,
And round them stood their Nubian victors gay;
Who, shouting in his praise, with loud acclaim,
Made all that region ring with Dudon's name.

LXXIII.

Rogero, when from far the ships he spied,
Believed they were the fleet of Agramant,
And, to know further, pricked his courser's side;
Then, nearer, mid those knights of mickle vaunt,
Nasamon's king a prisoner he descried,
Agricault, Bambirago, Farurant,
Balastro, Manilardo, and Rimedont;
Who stood with weeping eyes and drooping front.

LXXIV.

In their unhappy state to leave that crew
The Child, who loved those monarchs, cannot bear;
That useless is the empty hand he knew;
That where force is not, little profits prayer.
He couched his lance, their keeper overthrew,
Then proved his wonted might with faulchion bare;
And in a moment stretched upon the strand
Above a hundred of the Nubian band.

LXXV.

The noise Sir Dudon hears, the slaughter spies,
But knows not who the stranger cavalier :
He marks how, put to rout, his people flies,
With anguish, with lament and mighty fear ;
Quickly for courser, shield, and helmet cries,
(Bosom, and arms, and thighs, were mailed whilere)
Leaps on his horse, nor—having seized his lance—
Forgets he is a paladin of France.

LXXVI.

He called on every one to stand aside,
And with the galling spur his courser prest ;
Meanwhile a hundred other foes have died,
And filled with hope was every prisoner's breast ;
And as Rogero holy Dudon spied^o
Approach on horseback, (footmen were the rest,)
Esteeming him their head, he charged the knight,
Impelled by huge desire to prove his might.

LXXVII.

Already, on his part, had moved the Dane ;
But when he saw the Child without a spear,
He flang his own far from him, in disdain
To take such vantage of the cavalier .
Admiring at Sir Dudon's courteous vein,
" Belie himself he cannot," said the peer,
" And of those perfect warriors must be one
" That as the paladins of France are known.

LXXVIII.

“ If I my will can compass, he shall shew
“ His name, to me, ere further deed be done.”
He made demand; and in the stranger knew
Dudon, the Danish Ogier’s valiant son:
He from Rogero claimed an equal due,
And from the Child as courteous answer won.
—Their names on either side announced—the foes
A bold defiance speak, and come to blows.

LXXIX.

Bold Dudon had with him that iron mace,
Which won him deathless fame in many a fight:
Wherewith he proved him fully of the race
Of that good Danish warrior, famed for might.
That best of faulchions, which through iron case
Of cuirass or of casque was wont to bite,
Youthful Rogero from the scabbard snatched,
And with the martial Dane his valour matched.

LXXX.

But for the gentle youth was ever willed
To offend his lady-love the least he could,
And knew he should offend her, if he spilled,
In that disastrous battle, Dudon’s blood
(Well in the lineage of French houses skilled
He wist of Beatrice’s sisterhood,
—Bradamant’s mother she—with Armelline,
The mother of the Danish paladine).

LXXXI.

He therefore never thrust in that affray,
And rarely smote an edge¹⁰ on plate and chain.
Now warding off the mace, now giving way,
Before the fall of that descending bane.
Turpin believes, it in Rogero lay
Sir Dudon in few sword-strokes to have slain.
Yet never when the Dane his guard foregoes,
Save on the faulchion's flat descend the blows.

LXXXII.

The flat as featly as the edge he plies,
Of that good faulchion forged of stubborn grain;
And, at strange blindman's buff¹¹, in weary wise,
Hammers on Dudon with such might and main,
He often dazzles so the warrior's eyes,
That hardly he his saddle can maintain.
But to win better audience for my rhyme,
My canto I defer to other time.

NOTES TO CANTO XL.

1.

For so the lion's snout and claws you tore.

Stanza iii. line 6.

The Venetian lion.

2.

Protected by the sheltering boar and sow.

Stanza xviii. line 4.

Coperti da testuggini e gatti.

Machines under cover of which the assailants advanced to a storm, known by the name of *the cat and the tortoise* in Italian, are called *the boar and the sow* in the relations of our middle-age warfare.

3.

*Even with that rage wherewith the stream that reigns,
The king of rivers, &c.*

Stanza xxxi. lines 1 and 2.

—Sic aggeribus ruptis, cum spumeus amnis,
Exiit, oppositasque evicit gurgite moles,
Fertur in arva furens cumulo, camposque per omnes,
Cum stabulis armenta trahit.

VIRGIL.

Piscium summâ genus hæsit ulmo.

HORACE.

4.

Than girdles the infernal city round.

Stanza xxxiii. line 4.

In the Inferno of Dante.

5.

*In our own era, Lewis, hight the Moor,
Delivered into other Lewis' ward.*

Stanza xli. lines 3 and 4.

Lewis Sforza (*il Moro*) and Lewis the XII. of France.

6.

'Twixt Vulcan's lofty forge and Africk lies.

Stanza xlv. line 8.

Ætna, as the most prominent part of Sicily.

7.

*Where on all quarters that circumfluent sea,
By which they are inisled, is heard to roar.*

Stanza lv. lines 3 and 4.

In all the editions of the *Furioso* which I have seen, except the one printed under Ariosto's own eye, and *that* printed from it (from which I take my reading), the text says,

“ Una isoletta è questa, che dal mare
Medesimo che LA cinge, è circonfusa.”

The more authentic edition has “che LI cinge;” and it may be well to remark that the studious reader will relieve himself from many difficulties by consulting the editions to which I have alluded. Never was poet so changed, so overlaid, and so disfigured by those who have had the nursing and dressing of him as Ariosto; by editors, commentators, and translators; and, unfortunately, Ariosto—owing to the delicacy of his beauties—is precisely the poet who was sure to suffer most severely by such mismanagement.

8.

*He loves that king; and from his side to veer,
For this, believes would be no error light.*

Stanza lxxv. lines 3 and 4.

Rogero had vowed to Bradamant, that he would, on the first reasonable pretence, leave *Agramant and his evil sect*, to serve the God and the king of his fathers. This occasion is afforded him by the perjury of Agramant, whose service he had sworn to renounce, if he should, contrary to his oath, interrupt the duel between himself and Rinaldo. Yet, in spite of all this, we find him sacrificing faith and love to loyalty, and perjuring himself in favour of a perjured king. The thing is worthy of remark, because Rogero is evidently the hero of the poem; and, from the qualities with which Ariosto has generally invested him, we may suppose was intended as his pattern of a *preux chevalier*. In ascribing to him, therefore, the sentiments and conduct which he exhibits in the text, Ariosto has probably ascribed to him the quality that was most popular in his time, and has thus unwittingly pronounced the most damning satire on the morals of his age. For allegiance to person or party, exclusive of principle, is surely the most vulgar, as well as the most exceptionable, of all generous propensities, and Rogero might probably be outdone in his equivocal generosity by many of the tenants of every gaol in Christendom.

9.

And as alone he holy Dudon, &c.

Stanza lxxvi. line 5.

Dudon finished his career as a hermit, a very common practice with the supposed knights errant, and, like all the usages of romance, paralleled by many instances in real life during the middle ages. Ariosto's own age, indeed, furnished the most notable example in the self-seclusion of Charles the Fifth.

10.

*He therefore never thrust in that affray,
And rarely smote an edge, &c.*

Stanza lxxxi. lines 1 and 2.

The thrust was more dangerous than the cut, even in the days of armour, whether directed against mail or plate, because the sword might easily thread the links of the one, and might even pass between the interstices of the other, but to cut through either, and most through plate, was a more difficult operation.

11.

And at strange blindman's buff.

Stanza lxxxii. line 3.

E quivi a strano giuoco di sonaglio.

The Crusca dictionary explains *giuoco di sonaglio* to be the same thing as *gatta cieca*, which is our blindman's buff; and, as striking a helpless person forms a part of this game, the definition assorts very well with the passage before us: but the word *sonaglio* may lead to the suspicion that the game in question was not the *gatta cieca*, but the *gatto e sorcio* of the modern Lombards, which, however, is but a variety of blindman's buff, and which is played at in this manner:—A person who is blinded, and who is armed with a knotted handkerchief, is fastened to a cord attached to a pivot. Another, who is also blinded, and who is also fastened to the pivot by another cord, has a *small bell* in his hand, which he occasionally rings, and which serves as a guide to the other, whose business it is to catch him; and who, if he succeeds in this, beats him with his knotted handkerchief. Those who are conversant with rural sports will see in this game some resemblance to the jingling-match of our south-western counties, like which it is often played in the open air.

THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO XLI.

ARGUMENT.

*His prisoners to the Child the Danish peer
Consigns, who, homeward bound, are wrecked at sea;
By swimming he escapes, and a sincere
And faithful servant now of Christ is he.
Meanwhile bold Brandimart, and Olivier,
And Roland fiercely charge the hostile three.
Sobrino is left wounded in the strife;
Gradasso and Agramant deprived of life.*

THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO XLI.

I.

THE odour which well-fashioned beard or hair,
Or that which fine and dainty raiment steep
Of gentle stripling, or of damsel fair,
—Who often love awakens, as she weeps—
If it ooze forth and scent the ambient air,
And which for many a day its virtue keeps,
Well shows, by manifest effects and sure,
How perfect was its first perfume and pure.

II.

The drink that to his cost good Icarus drew¹
Of yore his sun-burned sicklemen to cheer,
And which ('tis said) lured Celts and Boi² through
Our Alpine hills, untouched by toil whilere,
Well shows that cordial was the draught, when new;
Since it preserves its virtue through the year.
The tree to which its wintry foliage cleaves,
Well shows that verdant were its spring tide leaves.

III.

The famous lineage, for so many years
Of courtesy the great and lasting light,
Which ever, brightening as it burns, appears
To shine and flame more clearly to the sight,
Well proves the sire of Este's noble peers
Must, amid mortals, have shone forth as bright
In all fair gifts which raise men to the sky,
As the glad sun mid glittering orbs on high.

IV.

As in his every other feat exprest,
Rogero's valiant mind and courteous lore
Were showed by tokens clear and manifest,
And his high mindedness shone more and more ;
—So toward the Dane those virtues stood confest,
With whom (as I rehearsed to you before)
He had belied his mighty strength and breath ;
For pity loth to put that lord to death.

V.

The Danish watrior was well certified,
No wish to slay him had the youthful knight,
Who spared him now, when open was his side ;
Now, when so wearied he no more could smite.
When finally he knew, and plain descried
Rogero scrupled to put forth his might,
If with less vigour and less prowess steeled,
At least in courtesy he would not yield.

VI.

“ Pardi, sir, make we peace;” (he said) “ success
“ In this contention cannot fall to me—
“ Cannot be mine; for I myself confess
“ Conquered and captive to thy courtesy.”
To him Rogero answered, “ and no less
“ I covet peace, than ’tis desired by thee.
“ But this upon condition, that those seven
“ Are freed from bondage, and to me are given.”

VII.

With that he showed these seven whereof I spake,
Bound and with drooping heads, a sad array;
Adding, ‘ he must to him no hindrance make,
‘ Who would those kings to Africa convey.’
And Dudon thus allowed the Child to take
Those seven, and him allowed to bear away
A bark as well; what likes him best he chooses,
Amid those vessels, and for Africk looses.

VIII.

He looses bark and sail; and in bold wise
Trusting the fickle wind, to seaward stood.
At first on her due course the vessel flies,
And fills the pilot full of hardihood.
The beach retreats, and from the sailors’ eyes
So fades, the sea appears a shoreless flood.
Upon the darkening of the day, the wind
Displays its fickle and perfidious kind^s.

IX.

It shifts from poop to beam, from beam to prow,
And even there short season doth remain :
The reeling ship confounds the pilot ; now
Struck fore, now aft, now on her beam again.
Threatening the billows rise, with haughty brow,
And Neptune's white herd lows above the main⁴.
As many deaths appear to daunt that rout,
As waves which beat their troubled bark about⁵.

X.

Now blows the wind in front, and now in rear,
And drives this wave an-end, that other back ;
Others the reeling vessel's side o'erpeer ;
And every billow threatens equal wrack.
The pilot sighs, confused and pale with fear ;
Vainly he calls aloud to shift the tack,
To strike or jibe the yard ; and with his hand,
Signs to the crew the thing he would command.

XI.

But sound or signal little boots ; the eye
Sees not amid the dim and rainy night ;
The voice unheard ascends into the sky⁶ ;—
The sky, which with a louder larum smite
The troubled sailors' universal cry,
And roar of waters, which together fight.
Unheard is every hest, above, below,
Starboard or larboard, upon poop or prow.

XII.

In the strained tackle sounds a hollow roar,
Wherein the struggling wind its fury breaks ;
The forked lightning flashes evermore;
With fearful thunder heaven's wide concave shakes.
One to the rudder runs, one grasps an oar ;
Each to his several office him betakes.
One will make fast, another will let go ;
Water into the water others throw⁷.

XIII.

Lo ! howling horribly, the sounding blast,
Which Boreas in his sudden fury blows,
Scourges with tattered sail the reeling mast :
Almost as high as heaven the water flows :
The oars are broken ; and, so fell and fast
That tempest pelts, the prow to leeward goes ;
And the ungoverned vessel's battered side
Is undefended from the foaming tide⁸.

XIV.

Fallen on her starboard side, on her beam ends,
About to turn keel uppermost, she lies.
Meanwhile, his soul to Heaven each recommends,
Surer than sure to sink, with piteous cries.
Scathe upon scathe malicious Fortune sends,
And when one woe is weathered, others rise.
O'erstrained, the vessel splits ; and through her seams
In many a part the hostile water streams.

XV.

A fierce assault and cruel coil doth keep
Upon all sides that wintry tempest fell.
Now to their sight so high the billows leap,
It seems that these to heaven above would swell;
Now, plunging with the wave, they sink so deep,
That they appear to spy the gulfs of hell.
Small hope there is or none: with faltering breath
They gaze upon inevitable death.

XVI.

On a despitous sea^o, that livelong night,
They drifted, as the wind in fury blew.
The furious wind that with the dawning light
Should have abated, gathered force anew.
Lo! a bare rock, ahead, appears in sight,
Which vainly would the wretched band eschew;
Whom toward that cliff, in their despite, impel
The raging tempest and the roaring swell.

XVII.

Three times and four the pale-faced pilot wrought
The tiller with a vigorous push to sway;
And for the bark a surer passage sought:
But the waves snapt and bore the helm away.
To lower, or ease the belying canvas aught
The sailors had no power; nor time had they
To mend that ill, or counsel what was best;
For them too hard the mortal peril prest.

XVIII.

Perceiving now that nothing can defend
Their bark from wreck on that rude rock and bare,
All to their private aims alone attend,
And only to preserve their life have care.
Who quickest can, into the skiff descend ;
But in a thought so overcrowded are,
Through those so many who invade the boat,
That, gunwale-deep, she scarce remains afloat.

XIX.

Rogero, on beholding master, mate,
And men abandoning the ship with speed,
In doublet, as he is, sans mail and plate,
Hopes in the skiff, a refuge in that need :
But finds her overcharged with such a weight,
And afterwards so many more succeed,
That the o'erwhelming waves the pinnace drown,
And she with all her wretched freight goes down ;

XX.

Goes down, and, foundering, drags with her whoe'er
Leaving the larger bark, on her relies.
Then doleful shrieks are heard, 'mid sob and tear,
Calling for succour on un pitying skies :
But for short space that shrilling cry they rear ;
For, swoln with rage and scorn, the waters rise,
And in a moment wholly stop the vent
Whence issues that sad clamour and lament.

XXI.

One sinks outright, no more to reappear;
Some rise, and bounding with the billows go;
Their course, with head uplifted, others steer;
An arm, an unshod leg, those others show:
Rogero, who the tempest will not fear,
Springs upward to the surface from below;
And little distant sees that rock, in vain
Eschewed by him and his attendant train.

XXII.

Himself with hands and feet the warrior rows,
Hoping by force thereof to win the shore;
Breasts boldly the importunate flood, and blows
With his unwearied breath the foam before.
Waxing meanwhile, the troubled water rose,
And from the rock the abandoned vessel bore;
Quitted of those unhappy men, who die
(So curst their lot) the death from which they fly.

XXIII.

Alas! for man's deceitful thoughts and blind!¹⁰
The ship escaped from wreck, where hope was none;
When master and when men their charge resigned,
And let the vessel without guidance run.
It would appear the wind has changed its mind,
On seeing all that sailed in her are gone;
And blows the vessel from those shallows free,
Through better course, into a safer sea.

XXIV.

She, having drifted wildly with her guide,
Without him, made directly Africk's strand,
Two or three miles of waste Biserta wide,
Upon the quarter facing Egypt's land;
And, as the sea went down and the wind died,
Stood bedded in that weary waste of sand.
Now thither Roland roved, who paced the shore;
As I in other strain rehearsed before;

XXV.

And willing to discover if alone,
Laden, or light, the stranded vessel were¹¹,
He, Olivier, and Monodantes' son*,
Aboard her in a shallow bark repair:
Beneath the hatchways they descend, but none
Of human kind they see; and only there
Find good Frontino, with the trenchant sword
And gallant armour of his youthful lord;

XXVI.

Who was so hurried in his hasty flight
He had not even time to take his sword;
To Orlando known; which, Balisarda hight,
Was his erewhile; the tale's upon record,
And ye have read it all, as well I wite;
How Falerina lost it to that lord¹²,
When waste as well her beauteous bowers he laid;
And how from him Brunello stole the blade;

* Brandimart.

XXVII.

And how beneath Carena, on the plain
Brunello on Rogero this bestowed.
How matchless was that faulchion's edge and grain,
To him experience had already showed;
I say, Orlando; who was therefore fain,
And to heaven's king with grateful thanks o'erflowed;
And deemed, and often afterwards so said,
Heaven for such pressing need had sent the blade:

XXVIII.

Such pressing need, in that he had to fight
With the redoubted king of Sericane;
And knew that he, besides his fearful might,
Was lord of Bayard and of Durindane.
Not knowing them, Anglantes' valiant knight
So highly rated not the plate and chain
As he that these had proved: they valued were,
But valued less as good than rich and fair;

XXIX.

And, for of harness he had little need,
Charmed, and against all weapons fortified,
To Olivier he left the warlike weed:
Not so the sword; which to his waist he tied:
To Brandimart Orlando gave the steed:
Thus equally that spoil would he divide
With his companions twain, in equal share,
Who partners in that rich discovery were.

XXX.

Against the day of fight, in goodly gear
And new, those warriors seek their limbs to deck.
Blazoned upon Orlando's shield appear
The burning bolt and lofty Babel's wreck.
A lyme-dog argent bears Sir Olivier,
Couchant, and with the leash upon his neck :
The motto; TILL HE COMES : In gilded vest
And worthy of himself he will be drest.

XXXI.

Bold Brandimart designed upon the day
Of battle, for his royal father's sake,
And his own honour, no device more gay
Than a dim surcoat to the field to take.
By gentle Flordelice for that dark array,
Was wrought the fairest facing she could make.
With costly jewels was the border sown;
Sable the vest, and of one piece alone.

XXXII.

With her own hand the lady wrought that vest,
Becoming well the finest plate and chain,
Wherein the valiant warrior should be drest,
And cloak his courser's croup and chest and mane :
But, from that day when she herself address
Unto this task, till ended was her pain,
She showed no sign of gladness; nor this while,
Nor after, was she ever seen to smile.

XXXIII.

The heartfelt fear, the torment evermore
Of losing Brandimart the dame pursued.
She him whilere a hundred times and more
Engaged in fierce and fearful fight had viewed;
Nor ever suchlike terror heretofore
Had blanched her cheek and froze her youthful blood;
And this new sense of fear increased her trouble,
And made the trembling lady's heart beat double.

XXXIV.

The warriors to the wind their canvas rear,
When point device the three accoutred are.
Bold Sansonet is left, with England's peer,
Intrusted with the faithful army's care.
Flordelice, pricked at heart with cruel fear,
Filling the heavens with vow, lament and prayer,
As far as they by sight can followed be,
Follows their sails upon the foaming sea.

XXXV.

Scarce, with much labour, the two captains* led
Her, gazing on the waters, from the shore,
And to the palace drew, where on her bed
They left the lady, grieved and trembling sore.
Meanwhile upon their quest those others sped,
Whom merry wind and weather seaward bore.
Their vessel made that island on the right;
The field appointed for so fell a fight.

* Astolpho and Sansonetto.

XXXVI.

Orlando disembarks, with his array,
His kinsman Olivier and Brandimart;
Who on the side which fronts the eastern ray,
Encamp them, and not haply without art¹³.
King Agramant arrives that very day,
And tents him on the contrary part.
But for the sun is sinking fast, forborne
Is their encounter till the following morn.

XXXVII.

Until the skies the dawning light receive,
Armed servants keep their watch both there and here.
The valiant Brandimart resorts that eve
Thitherward, where their tents the paynims rear;
And parleys, by his noble leader's leave,
With Agramant; for they were friends whilere;
And, underneath the banner of the Moor,
He into France had passed from Africk's shore.

XXXVIII.

After salutes, and joining hand with hand,
Fair reasons, as a friend, the faithful knight
Pressed on the leader of the paynim band
Why he should not the appointed battle fight;
And every town—restored to his command—
Lying 'twixt Nile and Calpe's rocky height,
Vowed he, with Roland's license, should receive,
If upon Mary's Son he would believe.

XXXIX.

He said; "For loved you were, and are by me,

"This counsel give I; that I deem it sane,

"Since I pursue it, you assured must be:

"Mahound I hold but as an idol vain;

"In Jesus Christ, the living God I see,

"And to conduct you in my way were fain;

"I' the way of safety fain would have you move

"With me and all these others that I love.

XL.

"In this consists your welfare; counsel none

"Save this, in your disaster, can avail;

"And, of all counsels least, good Milo's son

"To meet in combat, clad in plate and mail;

"In that the profit, if the field be won,

"Weighs not against the loss, in equal scale.

"If you be conqueror, little gain ensues,

"Yet little loss results not, if you lose.

XLI.

"Were good Orlando and we others slain,

"Banded with him to conquer or to die;

"Wherefore, through this, ye should your lost domain

"Acquire anew, forsooth, I see not, I;

"Nor is there reason hope to entertain

"That, if we lifeless on the champaigne lie,

"Men should be wanting in King Charles's host

"To guard in Africa his paltriest post."

XLII.

Thus Brandimart to Africk's cavalier;
And much would have subjoined; but, on his side,
That knight, with angry voice and haughty cheer,
The pagan interrupted, and replied;
" 'Tis sure temerity and madness sheer
" Moves you and whatsoever wight beside,
" That counsels matter, be it good or ill,
" Uncalled a counsellor's duty to fulfil;

XLIII.

" And how to think, from love those counsels flow
" Which once you bore and bear me, as you say,
" (To speak the very truth) I do not know,
" Who with Orlando see you here, this day.
" I ween that, knowing you are doomed to woe,
" And marked for the devouring dragon's prey,
" Ye all mankind would drag to nether hell,
" In your eternity of pains to dwell.

XLIV.

" If I shall win or lose, remount my throne,
" Or pass my future days in exile drear,
" God only knows, whose purpose is unknown
" To me, to thee, or to Anglantes' peer.
" Befall what may, by me shall nought be done
" Unworthy of a king, through shameful fear.
" If death must be my certain portion, I,
" Rather than wrong my princely blood, will die.

XLV.

" Ye may depart, who, save ye better play
" The warrior, in to-morrow's listed fight,
" Than ye have plaid the ambassador to-day,
" In arms will second ill Anglantes' knight."
Agramant ended so his furious say;
—His angry bosom boiling with despise.
So said—the warriors parted, to repose,
Till from the neighbouring sea the day arose.

XLVI.

When the first whitening of the dawn was seen,
Armed, in a moment leapt on horseback all;
Short parley past the puissant foes between.
There was no stop; there was no interval;
For they have laid in rest their lances keen:
But I into too foul a fault should fall
Meseems, my lord, if, while their deeds I tell
I let Rogero perish in the swell.

XLVII.

Cleaving the flood with nimble hands and feet
He swims, amid the horrid surges' roar,
On him the threatening wind and tempest beat,
But him his harassed conscience vexes more.
Christ's wrath he fears; and, since in waters sweet
(When time and fair occasion served of yore)
He, in his folly, baptism little prized,
Fears in these bitter waves to be baptized.

XLVIII.

Those many promises remembered are
Whereby he to his lady-love was tied,
Those oaths which sworn to good Rinaldo were,
And were in nought fulfilled upon his side.
To God, in hope that he would hear and spare,
'That he repented, oftentimes he cried,
'And, should he land, and scape that mortal scaith,
'To be a Christian,' vowed in heart and faith;

XLIX.

'And ne'er, in succour of the Moorish train,
'With sword or lance, the faithful to offend;
'And into France, where he to Charlemagne
'Would render honour due, forthwith to wend;
'Nor Bradamant with idle words again
'To cheat, but bring his love to honest end,
A miracle it is that, as he vows,
He swims more lightly and his vigour grows.

L.

His vigour grows; unwearied is his mind;
And still his arms from him the billow throw,
This billow followed fast by that behind;
Whereof one lifts him high, one sinks him low.
Rising and falling, vext by wave and wind,
So gains the Child that shore with labour slow;
And where the rocky hill slopes seaward most,
All drenched and dropping, climbs the rugged coast.

LI.

All the others that had plunged into the flood
In the end, o'erwhelmed by those wild waters died.
Rogero, as to Providence seemed good,
Mounted the solitary islet's side.
When safe upon the barren rock he stood,
A new alarm the stripling terrified ;
To be within those narrow bounds confined,
And die, with hardship and with hunger pined.

LII.

Yet he with an unconquered heart, intent
To suffer what the heavens for him ordained,
O'er those hard stones, against that steep ascent,
Towards the top with feet intrepid strained ;
And not a hundred yards had gone, when, bent
With years, and with long fast and vigil stained,
He worthy of much worship one espied,
In hermit's weed, descend the mountain's side ;

LIII.

Who cries, on his approaching him, "Saul, Saul,
"Why persecutest thou my faithful seed?"
As whilom said the Saviour to Saint Paul,
When (blessed stroke!) he smote him from his steed.
"Thou thought'st to pass the sea, nor pay withal ;
"Thought'st to defraud the pilot of his meed.
"Thou seest that God has arms to reach and smite,
"When farthest off thou deem'st that God of might."

LIV.

And he, that holiest anchoret, pursued,
To whom the night foregoing God did send
A vision, as he slumbered, and foreshewed
How, thither by his aid the Child should wend;
Wherein his past and future life, reviewed,
Were seen, as well as his unhappy end;
And sons, and grandsons, and his every heir,
Fully revealed to that good hermit were.

LV.

That anchoret pursues, and does upbraid
Rogero first, and comforts finally:
Upbraideth him, because he had delaid
Beneath that easy yoke to bend the knee;
And what he should have done, when whilom prayed
And called of Christ—then uncompeled and free—
Had done with little grace; nor turned to God.
Until he saw him threatening with the rod.

LVI.

Then comforts him—that Christ aye heaven allows
To them, that late or early heaven desire;
And all those labourers of the Gospel shows,
Paid by the vineyard's lord with equal hire.
With charity and warm devotion glows,
And him instructs the venerable sire,
As toward the rocky cell where he resides
He with weak steps and slow Rogero guides.

LVII.

Above that hallowed cell, on the hill's brow,
A little church receives the rising day;
Commodious is the fane and fair enow:
Thence to the beach descends a thicket gray,
Where fertile and fruit-bearing palm-trees blow,
Myrtle, and lowly juniper, and bay,
Evermore threaded by a limpid fountain,
Which falls with ceaseless murmur from the mountain.

LVIII.

'Twas well nigh forty years, since on that stone
The goodly friar¹⁴ had fixed his quiet seat;
Which, there to live a holy life, alone,
For him the Saviour chose, as harbourage meet.
Pure water was his drink, and, plucked from one,
Or the other plant, wild berries were his meat;
And hearty and robust, of ailments clear,
The holy man had reached his eightieth year.

LIX.

That hermit lit a fire, and heaped the board
With different fruits, within his small repair;
Wherewith the Child someddeal his strength restored,
When he had dried his clothes and dripping hair.
After, at better ease, to him God's word
And mysteries of our faith expounded were;
And the day following, in his fountain clear,
That anchoret baptized the cavalier.

LX.

There dwells the young Rogero, well content
With what the rugged sojourn does allow;
In that the friar showed shortly his intent
To send him where he fain would turn his prow.
Meanwhile with him he many an argument
Handles and often; of God's kingdom now;
Now of things appertaining to his case;
Now to Rogero's blood, a future race.

LXI.

The Lord, that every thing doth see and hear,
Had to that holiest anchoret bewrayed,
How he should not exceed the seventh year,
Dating from when he was a Christian made;
Who for the death of Pinabel whilere,
(His lady's deed, but on Rogero laid)
As well as Bertolagi's, should be slain
By false Maganza's ill and impious train;

LXII.

And, how that treason should be smothered so,
No sign thereof should outwardly appear;
For where that evil people dealt the blow,
They should entomb the youthful cavalier.
For this should vengeance follow, albeit slow,
Dealt by his consort and his sister dear;
And how he by his wife should long be sought,
With weary womb, with heavy burden fraught,

LXIII.

"Twixt Brenta and Athesis, beneath those hills
(Which erst the good Antenor so contented,
With their sulphureous veins and liquid rills¹⁸,
And mead, and field, with furrows glad indented,
That he for these left pools which Xanthus fills;
And Ida, and Ascanius long lamented,)
Till she a child should in the forests bear,
Which little distant from Ateste are ;

LXIV.

And how the Child, in might and beauty grown,
That, like his sire, Rogero shall be hight,
Those Trojans, as of Trojan lineage known,
Shall for their lord elect with solemn rite;
Who next by Charles (in succour of whose crown
Against the Lombards shall the stripling fight)
Of that fair land dominion shall obtain,
And the honoured title of a marquis gain ;

LXV.

And because Charles shall say in Latin '*Este*,'
(That is—be lords of the dominion round !)
Entitled in a future season *Este*
Shall with good omen be that beauteous ground ;
And thus its ancient title of Ateste
Shall of its two first letters lose the sound.
God also to his servant had foresaid
The vengeance taken for Rogero dead ;

LXVI.

Who shall, in vision, to his consort true
Appear somedea! before the dawn of day;
And shall relate how him the traitor slew,
And where his body lies to her shall say.
She and Marphisa hence, those valiant two,
With fire and sword on earth shall Poitiers lay;
Nor shall his son, when of befitting age,
Less harm Maganza in his mighty rage.

LXVII.

On Azos, Alberts, Obysons, did dwell
That hermit hoar, and on their offspring bright;
Of Borso, Nicholas, and Leonel,
Alphonso, Hercules, and Hippolyte,
And, last of those, the gentle Isabel;
Then curbs his tongue and will no more recite.
He to Rogero what is fit reveals,
And what is fitting to conceal, conceals.

LXVIII.

Meanwhile Orlando and bold Brandimart,
With that good knight, the Marquis Olivier,
Against the paynim Mars together start;
(Name well befitting Sericana's peer)
And the other two—that from the adverse part,
At more than a foot-pace their coursers steer;
I say King Agramant and King Sobrine:
The pebbly beach resounds, and rolling brine.

LXIX.

When they encountered in mid field, pell-mell,
And to the sky flew every shivered lance,
At that loud noise, the sea was seen to swell,
At that loud noise, which echoed even to France.
Gradasso and Roland met as it befel;
And fairly balanced might appear the chance,
But for the vantage of Rinaldo's horse;
Which made Gradasso seem of greater force.

LXX.

Bayardo shocked the steed of lesser might,
Backed by Orlando, with such might and main,
He made that courser stagger, left and right,
And measure next his length upon the plain:
Vainly to raise him strove Anglantes' knight,
'Thrice, nay four times, with rowels and with rein;
Balked of his end, he lights upon the field,
Draws Balisarda, and uplifts his shield.

LXXI.

With Agramant encounters Olivier,
Who, fitly matched, their foaming coursers gall.
Bold Brandimart unhorsed in the career
Sobrino; but it was not plain withal
If 'twas the fault of horse or cavalier;
For seldom good Sobrino used to fall.
Was it his courser's or his own misdeed,
Sobrino found himself without a steed.

LXXII.

Now Brandimart, that upon earth descried
The king Sobrine, assailed no more his man ;
But at Gradasso, who Anglantes' pride
Had equally unhorsed, in fury ran.
On Agramant and Oliviero's side,
Meanwhile the warfare stood as it began :
When broken on their bucklers were the spears,
With swords encountered the returning peers.

LXXIII.

Roland who saw Gradasso in such guise,
As showed that to return he little cared,
—Nor can return; so Brandimart aye plies,
And presses Sericana's monarch hard,
Turns round, and, like himself, afoot describes
Sobriño, in the doubtful strife unpaired :
At him he sprang; and, at his haughty look,
Heaven, as the warrior trod, in terror shook.

LXXIV.

Foreseeing the assault with wary eye,
Prepared, and at close ward, behold the Moor!
As pilot against whom, now cresting nigh,
The threatening billow comes with hollow roar,
Towards it turns his prow, and, when so high
He views the sea, would gladly be ashore.
Sobriño rears his buckler, to withstand
The furious fall of Falerina's brand.

LXXV.

Of such fine steel was Balisarda's blade,
That arms against it little shelter were ;
And by a person of such puissance swayed,
By Roland, single in the world or rare,
It splits the shield, and is in nowise stayed,
Though bound about with steel the edges are :
It splits the shield, and to the bottom rends,
And on the shoulder underneath descends.

LXXVI.

Upon the shoulder; nor, though twisted chain
And double plates encase the paynim foe,
These hinder much that sword of stubborn grain
From opening wide the parted flesh below.
Sobrino at Orlando smites; but vain
Against the valiant count is every blow;
To whom, for special grace, the King of heaven
A body charmed against all arms had given.

LXXVII.

The valorous count, redoubling still his blows,
Thought from the trunk the monarch's head to smite.
Sobrino, who the strength of Clermont knows,
And how the shield ill boots, retired from fight,
Yet not so far, but that upon his brows
Fell the dread faulchion of Anglantes' knight :
'Twas on its flat, but such his might and main,
It crushed the helm and stupefied the brain.

LXXVIII.

Stunned by that furious stroke, he pressed the shore,
And it was long ere he again did rise.
The paladin believes the warfare o'er,
And that deprived of life Sobrino lies ;
And, lest Gradasso to ill pass and sore
Should bring Sir Brandimart, at him he flies :
For him the paynim overmatched in horse,
In arms and faulchion, and perhaps in force.

LXXIX.

Bold Brandimart, who guides Frontino's rein,
The goodly courser, erst Rogero's steed,
So well contends with him of Sericane,
The king yet little seems his foe to exceed ;
Who, if he had as tempered plate and chain
As that bold paynim lord, would better speed ;
But (for he felt himself ill-armed) the knight
Often gave ground, and traversed left and right.

LXXX.

Better than good Frontino horse is none
To obey upon a sign the cavalier ;
'Twould seem that courser had the sense to shun
Sharp Durindana's fall, now there now here.
Meanwhile elsewhere is horrid battle done
By royal Agramant and Olivier ;
Who may be deemed well matched in warlike sleight,
Nor champions differing much in martial might.

LXXXI.

Orlando had left Sobrino (as I said)
On earth, and against Sericana's pride,
Desirous valiant Brandimart to aid,
Even as he was, afoot, in fury hied:
When, prompt to assail Gradasso with the blade,
He, loose and walking in mid field, espied
The goodly horse, which had Sobrino thrown;
And bowned him straight to make the steed his own.

LXXXII.

He seized the horse (for none the deed gainsaid)
And took a leap, and vaulted on his prize.
This hand the bridle grasped, and that the blade.
Orlando's motions good Gradasso spies;
Nor at his coming is the king dismaid;
Who by his name the paladin defies:
With him, and both his partners in the fight,
He hopes to make it dark before 'tis night.

LXXXIII.

Leaving his foe, he, facing Brava's lord,
Thrust at the collar of his shirt of mail,
All else beside the flesh the faulchion bored;
To pierce through which would every labour fail.
At the same time descends Orlando's sword,
(Where Balisarda bites no spells avail)
Shears helmet, cuirass, shield, and all below,
And cleaves whate'er it rakes with headlong blow;

LXXXIV.

And in face, bosom, and in thigh it seamed,
Beneath his mail, the king of Sericane.
From whom his blood till now had never streamed
Since he that armour wore ; new rage and pain
Thereat the warrior felt, and strange it seemed
Sword cut so now, nor yet was Durindane.
Had Roland struck more home, or nearer been,
From head to belly he had cleft him clean.

LXXXV.

No more in arms can trust the cavalier
As heretofore ; for proved those arms have been :
He with more care, more caution than whilere,
Prepares to parry with the faulchion keen.
When entered Brandimart sees Brava's peer,
Who snatched that battle from him, he between
Those other conflicts placed himself, that where
It most was needed, he might succour bear.

LXXXVI.

While so the fight is balanced 'mid those foes,
Sobrino, that on earth long time had lain,
When to himself he was returned, uprose,
In face and shoulder suffering grievous pain.
He lifts his face, his eyes about him throws ;
And thither, where more distant on the plain
He sees his leader, with long paces steers
So stealthily, that none his coming hears ;

LXXXVII.

He on the Marquis* came, who had but eyes
For Agramant, and in the warrior's rear,
Wounded upon the hocks in such fierce wise
The courser of unheeding Olivier,
That he falls headlong; and beneath him lies
His valiant master, nor his foot can clear;
His left foot, which in that unthought-for woe,
Was in the stirrup jammed, his steed below.

LXXXVIII.

Sobrine pursued, and with back-handed blow
Thought he his head should from his neck have shorn;
But this forbids that armour, bright of show,
By Vulcan hammered, and by Hector worn.
Brandimart sees his risque, and at the foe
Is by his steed, with flowing bridle, borne.
Sobrino on the head he smote and flung;
But straight from earth that fierce old man upsprung;

LXXXIX.

And turned anew to Olivier, to speed
The warrior's soul more promptly on its way;
Or at the least that baron to impede,
And him beneath his courser keep at bay:
Bold Olivier, whose better arm was freed,
And with his sword could fend him as he lay,
Meanwhile so smites and longes, there and here,
That at sword's length he holds the ancient peer.

* Oliviero.

XC.

He hopes, if him but little he withstood,
He shall be straight delivered from that pain :
He sees him wholly stained and wet with blood,
And that he spills so much from open vein,
'Twould seem he speedily must be subdued,
So weak he hardly can himself sustain.
Often and oft to rise the Marquis strove,
Yet could not from beneath his courser move.

XCI.

Brandimart has found out the royal Moor,
And storms about that paynim cavalier ;
Upon Frontino, like a lathe, before,
Beside, or whirling in the warrior's rear.
A goodly horse the Christian champion bore ;
Nor worse the southern king's in the career :
That Brigliador, Rogero's gift he crost,
Erewhile, by haughty Mandricardo lost.

XCII.

Great vantage has he, on another part :
Of proof and perfect is his iron weed.
His at a venture took Sir Brandimart,
As he could have in haste in suchlike need ;
But hopes (his anger puts him so in heart)
To change it for a better coat with speed ;
Albeit the Moorish king, with bitter blow,
Has made the blood from his right shoulder flow.

XCIII.

Him in the flank Gradasso too had gored ;
(Nor this was laughing matter) so had scanned
His vantage that redoubted paynim lord,
He found a place wherein to plant his brand ;
He broke the warrior's shield, his left arm bored,
And touched him slightly in the better hand.
But this was play, was pastime (might be said),
With Roland's and Gradasso's battle weighed.

XCIV.

Gradasso has Orlando half disarmed ;
Atop and on both sides his helm has broke :
Fallen is his shield, his cuirass split ; but harmed
The warrior is not by the furious stroke,
Which opened plate and mail ; for he is charmed ;
And worser vengeance on the king has wroke,
In face, throat, breast has gored that cavalier,
Beside the wounds whereof I spake whilere.

XCV.

Gradasso, desperate when he descried
Himself all wet, and smeared with sanguine dye,
And Roland, all from head to foot espied,
After such mighty strokes unstained and dry,
Thinking head, breast, and belly to divide,
With both his hands upheaved his sword on high ;
And, even as he devised, upon the front,
Smote with mid blade Anglantes' haughty count.

XCVI.

And would by any other so have done;
—Would to the saddle-tree have cleft him clean:
But the good sword, as if it fell upon
Its flat, rebounds again, unstained and sheen.
The furious stroke astounded Milo's son*
By whom some scattered stars on earth were seen.
He drops the bridle and would drop the brand,
But that a chain secures it to his hand.

XCVII.

So by the noise was scared the horse that bore
Upon his back Anglantes' cavalier,
The courser scowered about the powdery shore,
Showing how good his speed in the career:
The County by that stroke astounded sore,
Has not the power the frightened horse to steer.
Gradasso follows and will reach him, so
That he but little more pursues the foe;

XCVIII.

But turning round, beholds the royal Moor
To the utmost peril in that battle brought;
For by the shining helmet which he wore,
With the left hand, him Brandimart had caught;
Already had unlaced the casque before,
And with his dagger would new ill have wrought:
Nor much defence could make the Moorish lord;
For Brandimart as well had reft his sword.

XCIX.

Gradasso turned, nor more Orlando sought,
But hastened where he Agramant espied :
The incautious Brandimart, suspecting nought
Orlando would have let him turn aside,
Had not Gradasso in his eyes or thought,
And to the paynim's throat his knife applied.
Gradasso came, and at his helmet layed,
Wielding with either hand his trenchant blade.

C.

Father of heaven ! 'mid spirits chosen by thee,
To him thy martyr true, a place accord¹⁶ ;
Who, having traversed his tempestuous sea,
Now furls his sails in port. Ah ! ruthless sword,
So cruel, Durindana, can'st thou be,
To good Orlando, to thine ancient lord,
That thou can'st slaughter, in the warrior's view,
Of all his friends the dearest and most true ?

CI.

An iron ring that girt his helmet round,
Two inches thick, was broke by that fell blow
And cleft ; and with the solid iron bound,
Was parted the good cap of steel below,
Bold Brandimart, reversed upon the ground,
With haggard face beside his horse lies low ;
And issuing widely from the warrior's head
A stream of life-blood dyes the shingle red.

CII.

Come to himself, the County turns his eye
And sees his Brandimart upon the plain,
And in such act Gradasso standing by
As clearly shows by whom the knight was slain.
If he most raged or grieved I know not, I,
But such short time is left him to complain,
His hasty wrath breaks forth, his grief gives way;
But now 'tis time that I suspend my lay.



NOTES TO CANTO XLI.

1.

The drink that to his cost good Icarus drew.

Stanza ii. line 1.

Icarus or Icarius (by some represented as a son of Bacchus) gave his labourers wine to drink, who, being new to its effects, were intoxicated, and believing themselves poisoned, assassinated him. The story is told with some variations by different authors.

2.

And which ('tis said) lured Celts and Boi,

.
.

Since it preserves its virtue through the year.

Stanza ii. lines 3 and 6.

The Boi were themselves a *Celtic people* of Gaul, according to Cæsar.

The considering wine's keeping good for a single year as a test of its perfection gives us a very sorry idea of Italian wines in the time of Ariosto, and affords a singular contrast to the accounts of the period during which some such wines were formerly preserved, if we can give credit to Pliny. It is true that the greater part of the modern Italian wines will not long retain their flavour; but some (such as the *Piccoliti*, made in the province of Friuli, and the *vino di Breganza*, made in that of Vicenza) will keep for half a century.

3.

*The sea appears a shoreless flood.
Upon the darkening of the day, the wind
Displays its fickle and perfidious kind.*

Stanza viii. lines 6, 7, 8.

I have already remarked that these descriptions of storms in the Mediterranean, where the shores are more mountainous, shifts of wind more immediate, and cross seas more frequent than in our waters, are not to be judged by the effects of storms in the Atlantic, where Nature, if equally passionate, is, at least, less quick in choler: but in truth, Ariosto generally copies from a copy of such pictures by Virgil and Ovid; from the last of whom he has taken this beginning of the tempest;

Longe erat utraque tellus.
Cum mare sub noctem tumidis albescere cœpit
Fluctibus, et præceps spirare valentius Eurus.

4.

And Neptune's white herd lows above the main.

Stanza ix. line 6.

Mughliando sopra il mar vâ il gregge bianco.

I am indebted to Mr. Hoole for this line (*si sic omnia*!). Ariosto seems to have adopted a familiar image of the Italian sailors, who, according to *Isola*, in his edition of the *Furioso*, say, *Il mar comincia di far pecore*, when the sea begins to break; *i. e.* the sea begins to make sheep. It may be remarked that *cavalloni* (great horses) is the inland and along-shore denomination of waves in Italy, from a supposed likeness, I imagine, between their curling edges, roar, and the spray which is blown from them, to the creasing neck, snort, and steaming breath of the stallion. *Horses' heads* is also (if I recollect rightly) our term for a particular description of waves.

5.

*As many deaths appear to daunt that rout,
As waves which break their troubled bark about.*

Stanza ix. lines 7 and 8.

Totidemque videntur

Quot veniant fluctus, ruere atque irrumpere mortes.

OVID.

6.

*But sound or signal little boots; the eye
Sees not amid the dim and rainy night;
The voice unheard ascends into the sky.*

Stanza xi. lines 1, 2, 3.

Hic jubet; impediunt adversæ jussa proellæ
Nec sinit audiri vocem fragor æquoris ullam.

OVID.

7.

One grasps an oar.

.
.

Water into the water others throw.

Stanza xii. lines 5 and 8.

Alii subducere remos

.
.

Æquorque refundit in æquor.

OVID.

8.

*The oars are broken
the prow to leeward goes;
And the ungoverned vessel's battered side
Is undefended from the foaming tide.*

Stanza xiii. lines 5, 6, 7, 8.

Franguntur remi; tum proram avertit et undis
Dat latus.

VIRGIL.

9.

On a despicable sea, &c.

Stanza xvi. line 1.

'Per diverso mare.' *Diverso*, besides its more obvious meaning, signifies cruel, in which last sense I imagine it to be employed here; the word, I suppose, has acquired this sense as indicating a thing *different* from what it ought to be.

10.

Alas! for man's deceitful thoughts and blind!

Stanza xxiii. line 1.

Oh! cæcas hominum mentes!

11.

*And willing to discover if alone,**Laden, or light, the stranded vessel were.*

Stanza xxv. lines 1 and 2.

The first thing that probably will occur to the reader is that Orlando might have seen from the shore whether or no the vessel was alone; but there are parts of Africa (as off the Syrtes, as I am informed) where a person standing on the dry and solid land could not have a distinct view of the extremity of the shallows which border the coast.

12.

How Falerina lost it to that lord.

Stanza xxvi. line 6.

See the *lunamurato*.

13.

*Who on the side which fronts the eastern ray,
Encamp them, and not haply without art.*

Stanza xxxvi. lines 3 and 4.

That they might not have the rising sun in their faces, a matter of much importance in close combat. Ariosto, like Homer, wisely represents the party to whom he wishes well, as more superior to their enemies in arms and discipline than in courage.

14.

The goodly frier.

Stanza lviii. line 2.

'Il fraticel.' This diminutive is always to be taken in a good sense, and the word may be rendered by goodly frier or kindly frier.

15.

*'Twixt Brenta and Athesis, beneath those hills
Which erst the good Antenor so contented,
With their sulphureous veins and liquid rills, &c.*

Stanza lxiii. lines 1, 2, 3.

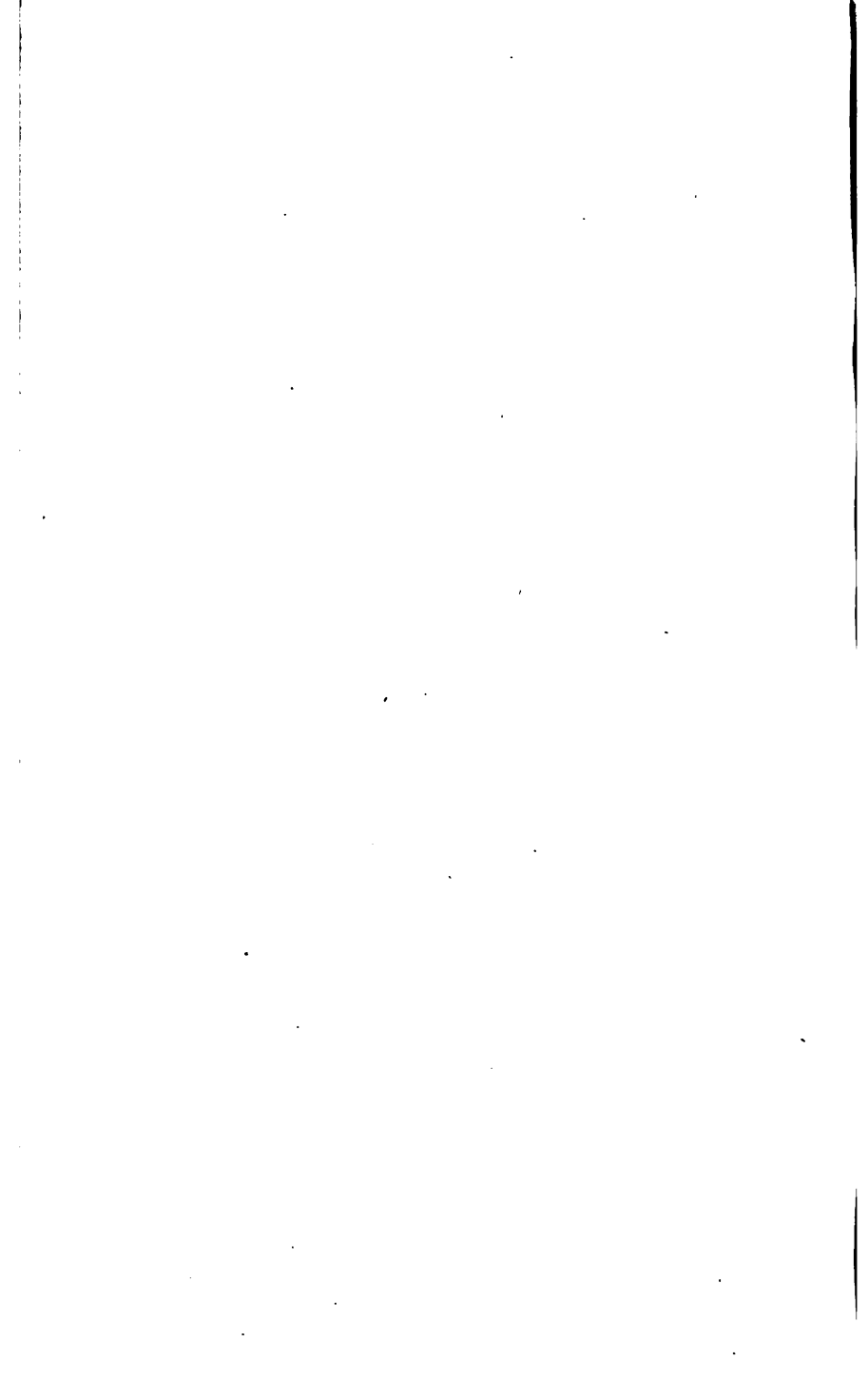
The volcanic district of Abano, famous for its mineral waters and muds, lying at the foot of the Euganean Hills, and every where intersected by hot streams.

16.

To him thy martyr true a place accord.

Stanza c. line 2.

He is termed a martyr as dying in a war with the infidels.



THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO XLII.

ARGUMENT.

*The victory with Count Orlando lies;
But good Rinaldo and Bradamant at heart,
(One for Angelica, the other sighs
For young Rogero) suffer cruel smart.
Him that in chase of the Indian damsel hies
Disdain preserves; from thence does he depart
Towards Italy, and is with courteous cheer
And welcome guested by a cavalier.*

THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO XLII.

I.

WHAT bit, what iron curb is to be found,
Or (could it be) what adamantine rein,
That can make wrath keep order and due bound,
And within lawful limits him contain?
When one, to whom the constant heart is bound
And linked by Love with solid bolt and chain,
We see, through violence or through foul deceit,
With mortal damage or dishonour meet.

II.

And is the mind sometimes, if so possess,
To ill and savage action led astray,
It may deserve excuse; in that the breast
No more is under Reason's sovereign sway.
Achilles, when, beneath his borrowed crest,
He saw Patroclus crimsoning the way,
Was with his murderer's slaughter ill content,
Till he his mangled corse had dragged and shent.

III.

Unconquered Duke Alphonso, anger so
Inflamed thy host¹ the day that weighty stone
Wounded thy forehead with such grievous blow,
That all believed it to its rest was gone;
—Inflamed them with such fury, for the foe
In rampart, fosse, or wall, defence was none,
Who, one and all, within their works lay dead,
Nor wight was left the woeful news to spread.

IV.

Seeing thy fall caused thine such mighty pain,
They were to fury moved: hadst thou, my lord,
Maintained thy footing, haply might thy train
Have with less licence plied the murderous sword.
Enough for thee thy Bastia to regain!
In fewer hours replaced beneath thy ward,
Than Cordova's and fierce Granada's band
Took days erewhile, to wrest it from thy hand.

V.

Haply Heaven's vengeance ordered what befel,
And in that case thy wound so hindered thee
To the end, the cruel outrage, foul and fell,
Done by that band before, should punished be.
For after the unhappy Vestidel²,
Wearied and hurt, had sought their clemency,
Among them (mostly an unchristened train)
He, mid a hundred swords, unarmed, was slain.

VI.

To end; I say that other rage is none
Which can be weighed with *that* in equal wise,
Which kindles, when an injury is done
To kinsman, friend or lord before our eyes.
Then justly in Orlando's heart, for one
So dear to him, might sudden fury rise;
When him he saw, extended on the sand,
Slain by the stroke of fierce Gradasso's brand.

VII.

As nomade swain, who darting on its way
In slippery line the horrid snake has seen,
That his young son, amid the sands at play,
Has killed with venom'd tooth, enflamed with spleen,
Grasps his baton, the poisonous worm to slay;
His sword, than every other sword more keen,
So, in his fury grasped Anglantes' knight,
And wreaked on Agramant his first despite,

VIII.

Scaped, bleeding, with helm loosened from his head,
With half a shield and swordless, through his mail,
Sore wounded in more places than is said;
As from the dull or envious falcon's nail,
Escapes the unhappy sparrowhawk, half dead,
With ruffled plumage and with loss of tail.
On him Orlando came and smote him just
Where with the helmed head confined the bust.

IX.

Loosed was the helm, the neck without its band :
So, like a rush, was severed by the sword.
Down-fell, and shook its last upon the sand
The heavy trunk of Libya's mighty lord.
His spirit, which flitted to the Stygian strand,
Charon with crooked boat-hook dragged aboard.
On him Orlando wastes no further pain,
But, sword in hand, seeks him of Sericane.

X.

As the headless trunk of Africk's cavalier
Extended on the shore Gradasso viewed,
(What never had befallen him whilere)
He shook at heart, a troubled visage shewed,
And, at the coming of Anglantes' peer,
Presageful of his fate, appears subdued⁴ :
Nor seeks he means of fence against his foe,
When fierce Orlando deals the fatal blow.

XI.

Orlando levels at his better side,
Beneath the lowest rib, his faulchion bright;
And crimsoned to the hilt, a hand's breadth wide
Of the other flank, the sword appears in sight;
And well his mighty puissance testified,
And spoke him as the strongest living knight
That stroke, by which a warrior was undone,
Better than whom in Paynimry was none.

XII.

Little his victory good Orlando cheers :

Himself he quickly from his saddle throws ;
And, with a face disturbed, and wet with tears,
To his Brandimart in haste the warrior goes ;
The field about him red with blood appears ⁵,
His helmet cleft as by a hatchet's blows ;
And, had it been than spongy rind more frail,
Would have defended him no worse than mail.

XIII.

Orlando lifts the helmet, and describes

Brandimart's head by that destructive brand
Cleft even to his nose, between the eyes ;
Yet so the wounded knight his spirits manned,
That pardon of the king of Paradise
He, before death, was able to demand,
And to exhort to patience Brava's peer,
Whose manly cheeks were wet with many a tear ;

XIV.

And—" Roland, in thy helping orisons, I

" Beseech thee to remember me," he cried,

" Nor recommend to thee less warmly my ⁶—"

—Flordelice would, but could not, say—and died ;

And sounds and songs of angels in the sky,

As the soul parts, are heard on every side ;

Which from its prison freed, mid hymns of love,

Ascends into the blissful realms above.

XV.

Orlando, albeit he should joy in heart
At death so holy, and is certified
That called to bliss above is Brandimart;
For he heaven opened to the knight descried;
Through human wilfulness—which aye takes part
With our weak senses—hardly can abide
The loss of one, above a brother dear,
Nor can refrain from many a scalding tear.

XVI.

Warlike Sobrino, of much blood bereaved,
Which from his flank and wounded visage rained,
Long since had fallen, reversed and sore aggrieved,
And had by now his vessels well nigh drained.
Olivier too lies stretched; nor has retrieved,
Nor can retrieve, his crippled foot, save sprained,
And almost crushed; so long between the plain,
And his stout courser jammed, the limb has lain;

XVII.

And but Orlando helped (so woe-begone
Was weeping Olivier, and brought so low)
He could not have released his limb alone;
And, when released, endures such pain, such woe,
The helpless warrior cannot stand upon,
Or shift withal his wounded foot, and so
Benumbed and crippled is the leg above,
That he without assistance cannot move.

XVIII.

The victory brought Orlando small delight;
On whom too heavily and hardly weighed
Of slaughtered Brandimart the piteous sight;
Nor sure of Oliviero's life he made.
Sobrino yet survived; but little light
The wounded monarch had, amid much shade:
For almost spent his ebbing life remained
So fast from him the crimson blood had drained.

XIX.

The County has him taken, bleeding sore;
Thither, where he is salved with sovereign care;
And he as if a kinsman of the Moor,
Benignly comforts him and speaks him fair:
For in Orlando, when the strife was o'er,
Was nothing evil; ever prompt to spare.
He from the dead their arms and coursers reft,
The rest he to their knaves' disposal left.

XX.

Here as my story stood not on good ground,
Frederick Fulgoso doubtful does appear;
Who, searching Barbary's every shore and sound
Erewhile on board a squadron, landed here;
And the isle so rugged and so rocky found,
In all its parts so mountainous and drear,
There is not (through the land) a level space
(He says) whereon a single foot to place.

XXI.

Nor deems he likely, that six cavaliers,
The wide world's flower, on Alpine rock should vye,
In that equestrian fight, with levelled spears.
To whose objection thus I make reply:
Erewhile a place, well fit for such careers,
Stretched at the bottom of the hills did lie;
But afterwards, o'erthrown by earthquake's shock,
A cliff o'erspread the plain with broken rock^s.

XXII.

So, of Fulgoso's race thou shining ray,
Clear, lasting light, if, questioning my word,
Thou on this point hast ever said me nay,
And haply too, before the unconquered lord^s,
Through whom thy land, reposing, casts away
All hate, and wholly leans to kind accord,
Prythee delay not to declare, that I
In this my story haply tell no lie.

XXIII.

Meanwhile his eyes the good Orlando reared,
And saw, on turning them to seaward, where
Under full sail a nimble bark appeared,
As if she to that island would repair.
I will not now rehearse who thither steered;
For more than one awaiteth me elsewhere.
Wend me to France and see if they be glad
At having chased the Saracens, or sad;

XXIV.

See what she does withal, the lady true,
That sees her knight content to wend so wide;
Of the afflicted Bradamant I shew;
After she saw the oath was nullified,
Made in the hearing of those armies two,
Upon the christian and the paynim side;
Since he again had failed her, there was nought
Wherein she could confide, the damsel thought.

XXV.

And now her too accustomed plaint and wail
Repeating, of Rogero's cruelty
Fair Bradamant renewed the wonted tale;
She cursed her hard and evil destiny;
Then loosening to tempestuous grief the sail,
Heaven that consented to such perjury,
—And did not yet by some plain token speak—
She, in her passion, called unjust and weak.

XXVI.

The sage Melissa she accused, and cursed
The oracle of the cavern, through whose lie
She in that sea of love herself immersed,
Upon whose waters she embarked to die.
She to Marphisa afterwards rehearsed
Her woes, and told her brother's perfidy;
She chides, pours forth her sorrows, and demands,
With tears and outcries, succour at her hands.

XXVII.

Marphisa shrugs her shoulders¹⁰; what alone
She can, she offers—comfort to the fair;
‘ Nor thinks Rogero her has so foregone
‘ But what to her he shortly will repair.
‘ And, should he not, such outrage to be done,
‘ The damsel plights her promise not to bear;
‘ Twixt her and him shall deadly war be waged,
‘ Or he shall keep the word, which he engaged.’

XXVIII.

She makes her somewhat thus her grief restrain;
Which having vent in some sort spends its gall.
Now we have seen the damsel in her pain
Rogero impious, proud, and perjured call,
See we, if in a happier state remain
The brother of that gentle maid withal;
Whose flesh, bones, nerves, and sinews are a prey
To burning love; Rinaldo I would say.

XXIX.

I say Rinaldo that (as known to you)
Angelica the beauteous loved so well:
Nor him into the amorous fillets drew
So much her beauty as the magic spell.
In peace reposed those other barons true;
For wholly broken was the infidel:
Alone amid the victors, he, of all
The paladins, remained Love’s captive thrall.

XXX.

To seek her he a hundred couriers sent,
And sought as well, himself, the missing maid :
He in the end to Malagigi went,
Who in his need had often given him aid :
To him he told his love, with eyelids bent
On earth, and visage crimsoned o'er ; and prayed
That sage magician to instruct him, where
He in the world might find the long-sought fair.

XXXI.

A case, so strange and wondrous, marvel sofe
In friendly Malagigi's bosom bred :
The wizard knew, a hundred times and more,
He might have had the damsel in his bed ;
And he himself, to move the knight of yore,
In her behalf, enough had done and said :
Had him by prayer and menace sought to bend,
Yet ne'er was able to obtain his end ;

XXXII.

And so much more, that out of prison-ward
He then would Malagigi so have brought¹¹.
Now will he seek her, of his own accord,
On less occasion, when it profits nought.
Next that magician Montalbano's lord
To mark how sorely he had erred, besought :
Since little lacked, but through the boon denied,
Erewhile he had in gloomy dungeon died.

XXXIII.

But how much more Rinaldo's strange demand
Sounded importunately in his ear,
So by sure index Malagigi scanned,
That so much was Angelica more dear.
Rinaldo's prayer unable to withstand,
In ocean sunk the wizard cavalier
All memory of old injuries assaid,
And bowed himself to give the warrior aid.

XXXIV.

For his reply he craved some small delay,
And with fair hope consoled Mount Alban's knight,
'He should be able of the road to say
'By which Angelica had sped her flight,
'In France or wheresoe'er;' then wends his way
Thither where he is wont his imps to cite;
A grot impervious and with mountains walled:
His book he opened and the spirits called.

XXXV.

Then one he chooses, in love-cases read,
Whom Malagigi to declare requires,
How good Rinaldo's heart, before so dead,
Was now so quickly moved by soft desires;
And 'of those fountains twain (the demon said)
'Whereof one lights, one quenches amorous fires;
'And how nought cures the mischief caused by one
'But that whose streams in counter current run;'

XXXVI.

And says ; ‘ Rinaldo, having drunk whilere
‘ From the love-chasing fountain’s mossy urn,
‘ To Angelica, that long had wooed the peer,
‘ Had shown himself so obstinate and stern ;
‘ And he, whom after his ill star did steer
‘ To drink of that which makes the bosom burn,
‘ Her whom but just before he loathed above
‘ All reason, by that draught was forced to love.

XXXVII.

‘ Him his ill star and cruel fate conveyed
‘ To swallow fire and flame i’ the frozen lake :
‘ For nigh at the same time the Indian maid
‘ In the other bitter stream her thirst did slake ;
‘ Which in her bosom so all love allayed,
‘ Henceforth she loathed him more than noisome snake ;
‘ He loved her, and such love was his, as late
‘ Rinaldo bore her enmity and hate.’

XXXVIII.

Of this strange story fully certified
Was Malagigi by the demon’s lore ;
Who news as well of Angelique supplied ;
‘ How yielding up herself to a young Moor,
‘ With him embarking on the unstable tide,
‘ She had abandoned Europe’s every shore ;
‘ And hoisting her bold canvas to the wind,
‘ In Catalonian galley loosed for Ind.’

XXXIX.

Rinaldo seeking out the sage anew

For his reply—‘ he would dissuade the knight
‘ From loving more that Indian lady, who
‘ Now waited on a vile barbarian wight ;
‘ And was so distant he could ill pursue,
‘ If he would chase the damsel on her flight,
‘ Who must have measured more than half her way
‘ Homeward, with young Medoro to Catay.’

XL.

In that bold lover no displeasure deep
The journey of Angelica would move ;
Nor yet would mar or break the warrior’s sleep
To think that he again must eastward rove :
But that a stripling Saracen should reap
The first fruits of that faithless lady’s love
In him such passion bred, such heart-ache sore,
He never in his life so grieved before.

XLI.

No power hath he to make one sole reply ;
His heart, his lip, is quivering with disdain ;
His tongue no word is able to untie ;
His mouth is bitter, and ’twould seem with bane¹².
He flung from the magician suddenly,
And, as by fury stirred and jealous pain,
He after mighty plaint and mighty wee
Resolved anew to eastern realms to go.

XLII.

Licence he asks of Pepin's royal son,
Upon the ground, 'since with his courser dear
' To Sericane is King Gradasso gone,
' Against the use of gallant cavalier,
' Him honour moves the selfsame course to run,
' In the end he may prevent the paynim peer
' From ever vaunting, that with sword or lance
' He took him from a Paladin of France.'

XLIII.

Charles gives him leave to go ; though, far and nigh,
With him all France laments he thence should wend ;
But he in fine that prayer can ill deny,
So honest seems the worthy warrior's end.
Him Dudon, Guido, would accompany ;
But he refuses either valiant friend :
From Paris he departs, and wends alone,
Plunged in his grief and heaving many a groan.

XLIV.

Ever in memory dwells the restless thought,
He might a thousand times have had the fair ;
And—mad and obstinate—had, when besought,
A thousand times refused such beauty rare ;
And such sweet joy was whilom set at nought,
Such bright, such blessed moments wasted were ;
And now he life would gladly give away
To have that damsel but for one short day.

XLV.

The thought will never from his mind depart,
How for a sorry footpage she could slight,
—Flinging their merit and their love apart—
The service of each former loving wight.
Vext by such thought, which racked and rent his heart,
Rinaldo wends towards the rising light:
He the straight road to Rhine and Basle pursued,
Till he arrived in Arden's mighty wood.

XLVI.

When within that adventurous wood has hied
For many a mile Montalban's cavalier,
Of lonely farm or lordly castle wide,
Where the rude place was roughest and most drear,
The sky disturbed he suddenly descried,
He saw the sun's dimmed visage disappear,
And spied forth issuing from a cavern hoar
A monster, which a woman's likeness wore.

XLVII.

A thousand lidless eyes are in her head:
She cannot close them, nor, I think, doth sleep:
She listens with as many ears, and spread
Like hair, about her forehead serpents creep.
Forth issued into day that figure dread
From devilish darkness and the caverned deep.
For tail, a fierce and bigger serpent wound
About her breast, and girt the monster round.

XLVIII.

What in a thousand, thousand quests had ne'er
Befal'n Rinaldo, here befel the knight;
Who, when he sees the horrid form appear,
Coming to seek him and prepared for fight,
Feels in his inmost veins such freezing fear,
As haply never fell on other wight;
Yet wonted daring counterfeits and feigns,
And with a trembling hand the faulchion strains.

XLIX.

The monster so the fierce assault did make
Therein her mastery was well descried,
It might be said; she shook a poisonous snake,
And now on this, now on the other side,
Leapt at the knight; at her Rinaldo strake
Ever meanwhile with random blows and wide;
With forestroke, backstroke, he assails the foe;
He often smites, but never plants a blow.

L.

The monster threw a serpent at his breast¹³,
That froze his heart beneath its iron case:
Now through the vizor flung the poisonous pest,
Which crept about his collar and his face.
Dismaid, Rinaldo fled the field, and prest
With all his spurs his courser through the chase:
But not behind the hellish monster halts,
Who in a thought upon the crupper vaults.

LI.

Wend where the warrior will, an-end or wide,
Ever with him is that accursed Pest :
Nor knows he how from her to be untied,
Albeit his courser plunges without rest.
Like a leaf quakes his heart within his side,
Not that the snakes in other mode molest,
But they such horror and such loathing bred,
He shrieks, he groans, and gladly would be dead.

LII.

By gloomiest track and blindest path he still
Threaded the tangled forest here and there ;
By thorniest valley and by roughest hill,
And wheresoever darkest was the air ;
Thus hoping to have rid him of that ill,
Hideous, abominable, poisonous Care ;
Beneath whose gripe he foully might have fared,
But that one quickly to his aid repaired.

LIII.

But aid, and in good time, a horseman bore,
Equipt with arms of beauteous steel and clear :
For crest, a broken yoke the stranger wore ;
Red flames upon his yellow shield appear :
So was the courser's housaing broidered o'er,
As the proud surcoat of the cavalier.
His lance he grasped, his sword was in its place,
And at his saddle hung a burning mace.

LIV.

That warrior's mace a fire eternal fills,
Whose lasting fuel ever blazes bright;
And goodly buckler, tempered corslet thrills,
And solid helm; then needs the approaching knight
Must make him way, wherever 'tis his will
To turn his inextinguishable light.
Nor of less help in need Rinaldo stands,
To save him from the cruel monster's hands.

LV.

The stranger horseman, like a warrior bold,
Where he that hubbub hears, doth thither swoop,
Until he sees the beast, whose snakes enfold
Rinaldo, linked in many a loathsome loop,
Who sweats at once with heat and quakes with cold,
Nor can he thrust the monster from his croup.
Arrived the stranger smote her in the flank,
Who on the near side of the courser sank:

LVI.

But scarcely was on earth extended, ere
She rose and shook her snakes in volumed spire.
The knight no more assails her with the spear;
But is resolved to plague the foe with fire:
He gripes the mace and thunders in her rear
With frequent blows, like tempest in its ire;
Nor leaves a moment to that monster fell
To strike one stroke in answer, ill or well;

LVII.

And, while he chases her or holds at bay,
Smites her and venges many a foul affront,
Counsels the paladin, without delay,
To take the road which scales the neighbouring mount:
He took that proffered counsel and that way,
And without stop, or turning back his front,
Pricked furiously till he was out of sight;
Though hard to clamber was the rugged height.

LVIII.

The stranger, when he to her dark retreat
Had driven from upper light that beast of hell
(Where she herself doth ever gnaw and eat,
While from her thousand eyes tears ceaseless well)
Followed the knight, to guide his wandering feet;
And overtook him on the highest swell;
Then placed himself beside the cavalier
Him from those dark and gloomy parts to steer.

LIX.

When him returned beheld Montalban's knight,
' That countless thanks were due to him,' he said,
' And that at all times, as a debt of right,
' His life should be for his advantage paid.
' Of him he next demands, how he is hight,
' That he may know and tell who brought him aid;
' And among worthy warriors, and before
' King Charles, exalt his prowess evermore.

LX.

The stranger answered ; " Let it irk not thee
" That I not now my name to thee display ;
" Ere longer by a yard the shadows be,
" This will I signify ; a short delay."
Wending together, they a river see
Whose murmurs woo the traveller from his way,
And shepherd-swain, by whiles, to their green brink ;
There an oblivion of their love to drink.

LXI.

My lord, that fountain's chilling stream and clear
Extinguished love ; Angelica of yore
Drinking thereof, for good Montalban's peer
Conceived that hate she nourished evermore ;
And if she once displeased the cavalier,
And he to her such passing hatred bore,
For this no other cause occasion gave,
My lord, save drinking of this chilly wave.

LXII.

Arriving at that limpid river's side,
The cavalier that with Rinaldo goes,
Reined-in his courser, hot with toil, and cried,
" Here 'twere not ill, meseemeth, to repose."
—" It cannot but be well" (the peer replied),
" Because, beside that mid-day fiercely glows,
" I have so suffered from that hideous Pest,
" As sweet and needful shall I welcome rest."

LXIII.

Upon the green sward lit the martial two,
While their loose horses through the forest fed;
And from their brows the burnished helmets threw
On that flowered herbage, yellow, green, and red.
Rinaldo to the liquid crystal flew,
By heat and thirst unto the river sped;
And with one draught of that cold liquor drove
Out of his burning bosom thirst and love.

LXIV.

Whenas Rinaldo, sated with the draught,
Raising his head the stranger knight espied,
And saw that he, repentant, every thought
Of that so frantic love had put aside,
He reared himself, and said with semblance haught¹⁴
That which he would not say before, and cried:
"Rinaldo, know that I am hight Disdain,
"Bound hither but to break thy worthless chain."

LXV.

So saying, suddenly he passed from sight;
With him his horse: this in Rinaldo bred
Much wonderment; and the astonished knight,
"Where is he?" gazing round about him, said.
He cannot guess if 'twere a magic sprite,
A fiend by Malagigi thither sped,
From those his ministers, to break the chain,
Fettered whereby he lived so long in pain;

LXVI.

Or if an angel from the heavenly sphere
In his ineffable goodness by the Lord,
Dispatched, as to Tobias's aid whilere,
A medicine for his blindness to afford.
But good or evil angel—whatsoe'er
He was that him to liberty restored—
Him thanked and praised Rinaldo, for a heart
Healed only by his help of amorous smart.

LXVII.

Old hate revived upon Rinaldo's side;
Nor he alone unworthy to be wooed,
The damsel deemed by pilgrimage so wide
Her half a league he would not have pursued.
Nathless anew Bayardo to bestride
To Sericane would go that warrior good:
As well because his honour him compelled,
As for the talk which he with Charles had held.

LXVIII.

He pricked to Baale upon the following day,
Whither the tidings had arrived before:
'That Count Orlando was, in martial fray,
'To meet Gradasso and the royal Moor:'
Nor through Orlando was divulged that say:
But one, who crost from the Sicilian shore,
And thither had, in haste, the journey made,
As certain news, the tidings had conveyed.

LXIX.

Rinaldo had gladly been at Roland's side,
And from that battle far himself doth see :
Every ten miles he changes horse and guide,
And whips and spurs, and makes his courser flee.
He crost the Rhine at Constance, forward hied,
He traversed Alp, arrived in Italy,
He left Verona, Mantua, in his rear,
And reached and past the Po, with swift career.

LXX.

Much towards eve already sloped the sun,
And the first star was glimmering in the sky,
When, doubting on the bank if he shall run
Another course, or in some hostel lie
Until the shades of night and vapours dun
Before Aurora's beauteous visage fly,
A cavalier approaching him he viewed,
Who courtesy in face and semblance shewed.

LXXI.

He, after greeting him, 'if he were tied
In wedlock,' made in gentle wise demand.
Rinaldo, wondering what the quest implied,
Made answer ; " I am bound in nuptial band."
—" I joy thereat," the cavalier replied ;
Then, that he might this saying understand,
Added, " I pray that you, sir knight, within
" My mansion will this eve be pleased to inn.

LXXII.

“ For I will make you see what needs must please
“ A wight” (pursued the stranger) “ that is wed.”
Rinaldo, as well that he would take his ease,
—By this, with so long posting sore bested—
As that to see and hear strange novelties
By natural desire he still was led,
His offer takes, and enters a new road,
Following that cavalier to his abode.

LXXIII.

A bowshot from the way diverged the two,
And a great palace fronting them descried :
Whence squires with blazing lights (a numerous crew)
Issued, and chased the darkness far and wide.
Entering, his eyes around Rinaldo threw,
And saw a place, whose like is seldom spied,
Of beauteous fabric, and well ordered plan ;
Nor such huge cost befitted private man.

LXXIV.

Of serpentine and of hard porphyry are
The stones which form the gateway’s arch above.
Of bronze the portal leaves, which figures bear,
Whose lively features seem to breathe and move.
Beneath the vaulted entry, colours rare
Cheating the eye, in mixt mosaic strove,
The quadrangle within was galleried,
And of a hundred yards, on every side.

LXXV.

A gateway is there to each galleried row,
And, twixt it and that gate, an arch is bent ;
Of equal breadth, but different in their show,
For the architect had spared not ornament.
Each arch an entrance was ; up which might go
A laden horse ; so easy the ascent ¹⁵.
To arch above leads every stair withal,
And every arch is entrance to a hall.

LXXVI.

Above, project the arches in such sort,
They for the spacious portals form a shade ;
And each two pillars has for its support :
Of bronze are some, and some of marble made.
The ornamented chambers of the court
Too many are to be at length displayed ;
With casements, which (beside what is in sight)
The skilful master underground had dight.

LXXVII.

Tall columns, with their capitals of gold,
Which gemmed entablatures support in air ;
Exotic marbles which adorn that hold,
By skilful hand engraved with figures fair ;
Picture and cast, and works so manifold,
Albeit by night they mostly hidden were,
Showed that two kings' united treasure ne'er
Would have sufficed such gorgeous pile to rear.

LXXVIII.

Above the beauteous ornaments and rich
That mingled in that gay quadrangle meet,
There is a fresh and plenteous fountain, which
Scatters in many threads its watery sheet.
'Tis here that youths at equal distance pitch,
I' the middle, tables for the festive treat.
Whence they four gates of that rich mansion see,
And seen from those four gates as well may be.

LXXIX.

By cunning master, diligent and wise,
With much and subtle toil, the fount was made :
In open gallery or pavilion's guise ;
Which from eight separate fronts, projects a shade.
A gilded roof, which with enamelled dyes
Was stained below, the building overlaid.
Eight marble statues (snowy was the grain),
With the left arm that gilded roof sustain.

LXXX.

Fair Amalthæa's horn in the right hand
Had quaintly sculptured the ingenious master,
Whence water, trickling forth with murmur bland,
Descends into a vase of alabaster ;
And he, in likeness of a lady grand,
With sovereign art had fashioned each pilaster.
Various they were in visage and in vest,
But all of equal charms and grace possess.

LXXXI.

Upon two beauteous images below

Each of these female statues fix their feet.
The lower seem with open mouth to show
That song and harmony to them are sweet ;
And, by their attitude, 'twould seem, as though
Their every work and every study meet
In praising them, they on their shoulders bear,
As they would those whose likenesses they wear.

LXXXII.

The images below them in their hand

Long scrolls and of an ample size contain,
Which of the worthiest figures of that band
The several names with mickle praise explain
As well their own at little distance stand,
Inscribed upon that scroll, in letters plain.
Rinaldo, by the help of blazing lights,
Marked, one by one, the ladies and their knights.

LXXXIII.

The first inscription there which meets the eye

Recites at length Lucretia Borgia's fame ¹⁶,
Whom Rome should place, for charms and chastity,
Above that wife who whilom bore her name.
Strozza and Tebaldèo ¹⁷—Anthony
And Hercules—support the honoured dame :
(So says the scroll) : for tuneful strain, the pair
A very Linus and an Orpheus are.

LXXXIV.

A statue no less jocund, no less bright,
Succeeds, and on the writing is impressed;
' Lo! Hercules' daughter, Isabella hight¹⁸,
' In whom Ferrara deems her city blest,
' Much more because she first shall see the light
' Within its circuit, than for all the rest
' Which kind and favouring Fortune in the flow
' Of rolling years, shall on that town bestow.'

LXXXV.

The pair that such desirous ardour shew
That aye her praises should be widely blown;
John, James alike are named: of those fair two,
One is Calandra, one is Bardelon¹⁹.
In the third place, and fourth, where trickling through
Small rills, the water quits that octagon,
Two ladies are there, equal in their birth,
Equal in country, honour, charms and worth.

LXXXVI.

One was Elizabeth, one Eleanor²⁰,
And if we credit what that marble said,
Manto's so glorious city which such store
Sets by melodious Maro, whom she bred,
More vaunts not him, nor reverences more,
Than these fair dames her poet's honoured head.
The first of these her hallowed feet had set
On Peter Bembo and James Sadolet²¹.

LXXXVII.

Arelio and Castiglion²², a polished pair,
That other lady, in mid air, sustain.
Their names were carved upon the marble fair,
Then both unknown, and now so famed a twain.
Next was a lady, that from Heaven shall heir
As mighty virtue as on earth doth reign,
Or ever yet hath reigned, in any age,
Well proved by Fortune in her love or rage.

LXXXVIII.

Inscribed in characters of gold is here
Lucretia Bentivoglia²³, and among
Her praises, 'tis declared Ferrara's peer
Joys that such daughter doth to him belong.
Her shall Camillus voice²⁴, and far and near
Reno and Felsina shall hear his song,
Wrapt in as mighty wonder at the strain
As that wherewith Amphrysus heard his swain²⁵;

LXXXIX.

And one, through whom that city's name (where sweet
Isaurus salts his wave in larger vase)
Fame shall from Africa to Ind repeat,
From southern tracts to Hyperborean ways,
More than because Rome's gold in that famed seat
Was weighed, whereof perpetual record says²⁶
Guy Posthumus²⁷—about whose honoured brow
Phœbus and Pallas bind a double bough.

XC.

Dian is next²⁸ in order of that train.

“ Regard not (said the marble) if she wear
“ A haughty port; for in her heart, humane
“ The matron is, as in her visage, fair.
“ Learned Celio Calcagnine²⁹ in lofty strain
“ Her glories and fair name abroad shall bear,
“ And Juba’s and Moneses’ kingdom hear³⁰,
“ And Spain and farthest Ind, his trumpet clear;

XCI.

And a Cavallo³¹ shall make such a font

Of poetry in famed Ancona run,
As that winged courser on Parnassus’ mount;
Or was it on the hill of Helicon?
’Tis Beatrice³², who next uprears her front,
Whereof so speaks the writing on the stone:
“ Her consort Beatrice, while she has breath,
“ Blesses, and leaves unhappy at her death;

XCII.

“ Yea, Italy; that with her triumphs bright,
“ Without that lady fair shall captive be.”
A lofty song appears of her to indite
A lord of the Correggio’s noble tree;
And, Benedò’s pride, Timotheus hight³³.
Between his banks, descending to the sea,
By their joint music shall the stream be stopt,
Whose trees erewhile the liquid amber dropt³⁴.

XCIII.

Between this and that lofty column's place
Into fair Borgia fashioned (as was said)
Of aspect so distinguished, of such grace,
A lady was, of alabaster made,
That, hiding in a simple veil her face,
In sable, without gems or gold arraid,
She, 'mid the brightest, flung her light as far,
As amid lesser fires the Cyprian star.

XCIV.

None knows, observing her with steadfast view,
If she of charms or grace have fuller store,
Whether her visage most majestic shew,
Or beam with genius or with beauty more.
"He that would speak—would speak her praises true—
(Declares in fine the sculptured marble's lore)
"The fairest of emprizes would intend,
"But never bring his noble task to end.

XCV.

Albeit such grace and passing sweetness shewed
Her fair and well wrought image, she disdain
Appeared to nurse, that one of wit so rude
Should dare to sing her praise in humble strain,
As he that only without comrade stood,
I know not why, her statue to sustain,
The marble all those other names revealed.
That pair's alone the artist had concealed³⁵.

XCVI.

The statues in the middle form a round,
The floor whereof dry stalks of coral pave;
Most pleasant, cool, and grateful, is that ground;
So rendered by the pure and crystal wave.
Which vent without in other channel found;
And issued forth in many a stream, to lave
A mead of azure, white, and yellow hue;
Gladdening the plants that on their margins grew.

XCVII.

Conversing with his courteous host, the peer
Sate at the board, and oft and often prayed,
That without more delay the cavalier
Would keep the promise he whilere had made;
And marking, ever and anon, his cheer,
Observes his heart with some deep woe downweighed.
For not a moment 'mid their converse slips,
But what a burning sigh is on his lips.

XCVIII.

Oft with desire was good Rinaldo stung
To ask that sorrow's cause, and the request
Was almost on the gentle warrior's tongue,
And there by courteous modesty repress.
Now at their banquet's close a youth, among
The menial crew, on whom that charge did rest,
Placed a gold cup before the paladin,
Filled full of gems without, of wine within.

XCIX.

The host then somedea! smiling, from the board
Looked up at Aymon's son; but who this while
Well marked him, as he eyed Montalban's lord,
Had deemed him more disposed to weep than smile.
" So oft reminded, to maintain my word,
" 'Tis time meseems (said he, that owned the pile)
" To shew the touchstone for a woman's love,
" Which needs to wedded man must welcome prove.

C.

" Ne'er, in my judgment, should the married dame
" Be from espial by her lord released;
" Thus shall he know if honour or if blame
" His portion is; if he is man or beast.
" The weight of horns, though coupled with such shame,
" Is of all burdens upon earth the least.
" While well-nigh all behold his antlers spread,
" He feels them not who has them on his head.

CI.

" If certain of thy wife's fidelity,
" Thou hast more ground to prize and hold her dear
" Than one, whose wife is evil known to be,
" Or husband that is still in doubt and fear.
" Full many husbands live in jealousy,
" And groundlessly, of women chaste and clear.
" On many women many men rely
" Meanwhile, who bear their branching antlers high.

CII.

- “ If thou would’st be assured thy wife is true
“ (As sure methinks thou thinkest and must think)
“ For it is hard that notion to undo,
“ Unless thy trust before sure tokens sink,
“ —No hearsay matter this—thyself shalt view
“ The truth, if thou in this fair vessel drink³⁶,
“ Placed solely on the supper-board, that thou
“ May’st see the marvel promised thee but now.

CIII.

- “ Drink, and a mighty marvel shall be seen;
“ For if thou wearest Cornwall’s lofty crest³⁷,
“ No drop of wine shall pass thy lips between,
“ And all the draught be spilt upon thy breast.
“ If faithful is thy wife, thou shalt drink clean.
“ And now—to try thy fortune—to the test!”
He said, and with fixt eyes the sign explored;
If on his breast the wine Rinaldo poured.

CIV.

Rinaldo was nigh moved the cup to raise,
And seek what he would haply wish unsought :
Forward he reached his hand and took the vase,
About to prove his fortune in the draught.
Then of the passing peril of the case,
Before it touched his lips, the warrior thought.
But let me, sir, repose myself, and I
Will then relate the Paladin’s reply.



NOTES TO CANTO XLII.

1.

*Unconquered Duke Alphonso, anger so
Inflamed thy host.*

Stanza iii. lines 1 and 2.

“He commemorates the victory of Alphonso of Este over the Spaniards, at the taking of Bastia, a strong fortress on the Po. Alphonso in the attack was wounded by a stone from an engine.”—HOOLE.

2.

*For after the unhappy Vestidel,
Wearied and hurt, had sought their clemency.*

Stanza v. lines 5 and 6.

“Vestidello, the governor of the fort, when taken by the Spaniards, had been slain by them in cold blood.”—H.

He calls them *mostly an unchristened train*, I suppose, as drawn principally from the Moorish provinces.

3.

*As from the dull or envious falcon's nail,
Escapes the unhappy sparrowhawk, half dead,
With ruffled plumage and with loss of tail.*

Stanza viii. lines 4, 5, 6.

Come di piè a l' astor sparvier mal vivo,
A cui lascia la coda invido o stolto.

It would appear from this passage as if the large falcon sometimes struck the smaller one, his companion in the chase, instead of the quarry; which Ariosto attributes to stupidity or *jalousie de métier*.

4.

*And, at the coming of Anglantes' peer,
Presageful of his fate, appears subdued.*

Stanza x. lines 5 and 6.

Ariosto here follows Homer and Virgil, who attribute the same presentiment to Hector and Turnus on the eve of the combat in which they perished.

5.

The field about him red with blood appears.

Stanza xii. line 5.

I have taken my reading from the edition printed under Ariosto's own inspection; viz.

'Gli vede intorno il CAMPO sanguiposo,'

which, independently of its authority, I think greatly preferable to that which is the reading of the other editions that have fallen under my observation. These have;

'Gli vede intorno il CAPO sanguinoso.'

6.

*"Nor recommend to thee less warmly my—"
—Flordelice would, but could not, say—and died.*

Stanza xiv. lines 3 and 4.

In the Italian,

*"Nè men ti raccomando la mia Flordi—"
Ma dir non puote ligi; e qui finì.*

I have, though at a miserable distance, followed my author as nearly as the nature of our language will permit,

‘Non ita certaudi cupidus quam propter amorem:’

but feeling how ill I have been able to imitate him, I feel it the more a duty to direct the reader’s attention to the original, begging him to consider the licence with respect to its exquisite effect in this place, not suffering himself to be reasoned out of his feelings, and still less to be laughed out of them by a piece of successful buffoonery.

7.

Frederick Fulgoso doubtful does appear.

Stanza xx. line 2.

Frederick Fregoso, apparently termed Fulgoso for the introduction of a poor play upon words in the succeeding stanza; as

Sì che, o chiaro fulgor de la fulgosa luce.

8.

*But afterwards, o’erthrown by earthquake’s shock,
A cliff o’erspread the plain with broken rock.*

Stanza xxi. lines 7 and 8.

Here again Ariosto seems to have had Homer in his eye, where he obviates the objections that might be made to the truth of his story from the total destruction of the Grecian wall; but the magnificent moral with which Homer has pointed his tale was not to be imitated.

9.

And haply too, before the unconquered lord.

Stanza xxii. line 4.

“Octavian Fregoso, doge of Genoa, and brother of Frederick.”—H.

10.

Marphisa shrugs her shoulders.

Stanza xxvii. line I.

Marfisa si ristringe ne le spalle,

which Hoole translates,

Round her loved friend her arms Marphisa throws.

There is no language the familiar idioms of which are so often ridiculously mistranslated as those of Italian: As an example, I was desired, after the first entry of the allies into Paris, to get a little work translated, describing the treatment of Pope Pius VII. by Napoleon, and put it into the hands of a bookseller, who employed a person upon the work whom I knew to be accomplished and well versed in the English round of Italian literature. I was, however, strangely surprised on finding a phrase in the translation which, with reference to what preceded and succeeded it, was absolutely unintelligible. The words were (it is the Pope who speaks) "We are here and must remain here," the original of which turned out to be, *Ci siamo; bisogna starci*, which is in vulgar English; "We are in for it (and) must go through with it." Every word considered separately was rightly translated, yet the sentence was ridiculously wrong. Now whether the principle of rigorous or free translation be preferable may be doubtful, but no one can doubt that idioms, even where the most rigorous translation is desirable, should be rendered by equivalents. Yet the most exact and perhaps the best translation ever made, *that* of the new—and probably *that* of the old—testament, is defective in this particular, being often more true to the words than to the meaning of the phrase.

If I weary the reader by noticing Hoole's mistakes, I can assure him that I have commented upon few, in comparison of the many which he has committed, and that I have usually confined myself to such as are illustrative of some particular species of error into which he has blundered.

11.

*And so much more, that out of prison-ward
He then would Malagigi so have brought.*

Stanza xxxii. lines 1 and 2.

When Angelica loved and Rinaldo hated, Malagigi, then Angelica's prisoner, was released conditionally, that he might negotiate with his cousin, she promising him final liberty if he brought him to her feet.

12.

His mouth is bitter, and 'twould seem with bane.

Stanza xli. line 4.

I have observed, on a former occasion, on Ariosto's being (as far as I am informed) the only poet who has alluded to this effect of severe passion.

13.

The monster threw a serpent at his breast.

Stanza l. line 1.

Huic dea cæruleis unum de crinibus anguem
Conjicit, &c.

VIRGIL.

14.

He reared himself, and said with semblance haught.

Stanza lxiv. line 5.

I have in my notes to an early canto observed that Ariosto appeared to me superior to his imitators in the management of allegory; more especially in his rarely introducing absolutely abstract personages in his poem: but where he departs from this principle, as in the present instance, is he not equally superior? What unreal or real being can exhibit more individuality than Disdain, with his few words and haughty bearing; and what could present such a fine scene and accompaniment for the ap-

pearance of the monster Jealousy and her enemy, as the wood of Ardennes, and the sun bedimmed? It is in reading this canto that we fully feel the charm

‘Of forests and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.’

15.

*Up which might go
A laden horse; so easy the ascent.*

Stanza lxxv. lines 5 and 6.

The principal characteristics of this palace, though the magnificence is exaggerated, may be found in parts, if not in a whole, in some of the old fabrics of Italy, and a stair, or rather inclined plane,

ove si poggia
Si facil, ch' un somièr vi può gir carco,

is yet to be seen, in the ancient part of the Castle of Obizzo in the province of Padua. The luxury of easy stairs, a most desirable one in a hot country, is more studied by southern than by northern architects. The lofty steeple of St. Mark's at Venice is ascended with little inconvenience by a series of traverses slightly indented, and the stair-case of the Grand Master's palace at Malta is practicable on ass-back.

16.

Lucretia Borgia's fame.

Stanza lxxxiii. line 2.

“Daughter of Pope Alexander Borgia, and wife to duke Alphonso.”—H. This lady, thus famed for her chastity, was (it will be remembered) taxed with double incest previous to her marriage. A distinguished modern historian thinks this stanza a refutation of the charge; inasmuch as he argues from it that, if the accusation had been credited in that age, Ariosto would not have dared, in despite of public opinion, to

have celebrated her for a virtue so very much out of her way; and to have exalted her above the Lucretia of ancient Rome. As it is a question which concerns an age equally distinguished for rank, flattery, and rancorous scandal, perhaps either side might be maintained with equal plausibility.

17.

Strozza and Tebaldeo, &c.

Stanza lxxxiii. line 5.

"Antonio Tebaldeo, a poet in the time of Ariosto: he died of a deep melancholy. When the victorious Charles V. returned from his conquest in Africa, and passed in triumph before the house of Tebaldeo, he ordered his doors and windows to be shut, that he might not see him, being offended that he had not taken vengeance for the sack of Rome. Hercules Strozza, of Ferrara, was son of Tito the poet, but excelled his father; his passion for the fair sex was the occasion of his death. He was deeply in love with a noble and beautiful widow named Taurella, whom he married, but was afterwards assassinated by order of his rival, Alphonso duke of Ferrara." —H.

18.

Hercules' daughter, Isabella hight.

Stanza lxxxiv. line 3.

"Isabella, daughter of Hercules, duke of Ferrara, and wife to the marquis of Mantua." —H.

19.

One is Calandra, one is Bardelon.

Stanza lxxxv. line 4.

"Both named Gian Jacobi (John James), and Mantuans by birth. Calandra wrote on amorous subjects, in verse and prose." —H. Some editions read *Gran Jacobi*, but *Gian Jacobi* is that of the authentic one.

20.

One was Elizabeth, one Eleanor.

Stanza lxxxvi. line 1.

"Elizabeth was sister to Francesco Gonzago, marquis of Mantua, and wife to Guidobaldo, duke of Urbino. Eleanor, daughter to the before-mentioned marquis, and afterwards to Francesco Maria dalle Rovere, who was by means of Julius II. created duke of Urbino."—H.

21.

On Peter Bembo and James Sadolet.

Stanza lxxxvi. line 8.

"Sadoletto, first a bishop, and then a cardinal, created by Paul III. He published many theological subjects, and was an excellent poet: Bembo called him his colleague, on account of the similarity of their manners. Bembo composed a book in praise of him and the wife of Guidobaldo. Sadoletto was secretary to Pope Leo X. and signed the diploma granted to Ariosto's poem: he wrote two poems, called Curtius, and Laocöon: he died at Rome, anno 147, aged 70."—H.

22.

Aurelio and Castiglione, &c.

Stanza lxxxvii. line 1.

"Castiglione, of Mantua, author of the Cortegiano: he wrote also Cleopatra in heroic verse: he was sent by Clement ambassador to Charles V. and by him made a bishop. Mutio Aurelio composed many things, being an academician of Rome in the time of Leo X.: he was killed by a blow given him by one of his enemies."—H.

23.

Lucretia Bentivoglio.

Stanza lxxxviii. line 2.

"Natural daughter of the duke of Ferrara, allied by marriage to the family of the Bentivogli of Bologna."—H.

24.

Her shall Camillus voice, &c.

Stanza lxxxviii. line 5.

"Camillo Paleotto, a courier in the court of cardinal Bibiena, of Bologna."—H.

25.

As that wherewith Amphrysus heard his swain.

Stanza lxxxviii. line 8.

Apollo who, when banished from heaven, kept sheep on the banks of the Amphrysus.

26.

*And one, through whom that city's name (where sweet
Isaurus salts his wave in larger vase)
Fame shall from Africa to Ind repeat,
From southern tracts to Hyperborean ways,
More than because Rome's gold in that famed seat
Was weighed, whereof perpetual record says.*

Stanza lxxxix. lines 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

The Isaurus, now called *La Foglia*, runs into the Adriatic near *Pesaro*; which, it is the vulgar opinion (says an Italian commentator), derived its ancient name of *Pisaurum* from the Roman gold having been weighed there.

27.

Guy Posthumus.

Stanza lxxxix. line 7.

"Guido Posthumus, who celebrated the praises of Lucretia Bentivoglia."—H.

28.

Dian is next.

Stanza xc. line 1.

"Diana of Este, a lady of excellent beauty, but of haughty deportment and manners."—H.

29.

Learned Cello Calcagnine.

Stanza xc. line 5.

“ Of Ferrara, and a canon of the church, an elegant writer in prose and verse.”—H.

30.

And Juba's and Moneses' kingdom.

Stanza xc. line 7.

“ Parthia and Mauritania.”—H.

31.

And a Cavallo.

Stanza xci. line 1.

“ Marco Cavallo, of the city of Ancona ; he composed many verses: he was extremely addicted to gaming, and was at last found dead in his bed, with five hundred crowns tied to his arm.”—H. The play on words in the original is necessarily lost.

32.

'Tis Beatrice.

Stanza xci. line 5.

“ Daughter of Hercules of Ferrara.”—H.

33.

*A lord of the Correggio's noble tree ;**And, Benedèo's pride, Timotheus hight.*

Stanza xcii. lines 4 and 5.

“ Nicolo di Correggio, held in great esteem by the Italian nobility, and chiefly by Hercules I. He wrote in octave stanzas a poem called Psyche, and another called Aurora. Correggio

is the name of the castle held by the illustrious family of the Correggios of Parma. Timotheo Benedeo of Ferrara, a man of literature."—H.

34.

*By their joint music shall the stream be stopt,
Whose trees erewhile the liquid amber dropt.*

Stanza xcii. lines 7 and 8.

The Po, and the poplars into which Phaëton's sisters were metamorphosed.

35.

*The marble all those other names revealed.
That pair's alone the artist had concealed.*

Stanza xcv. lines 7 and 8.

Hoole, treading in the steps of timid guides, observes, hesitatingly, that some think Ariosto may have figured his mistress and himself in these nameless statues. The reader, whether informed or not of the poet's history, will, I dare say, very unhesitatingly have come to this conclusion. But who this mistress was is a more doubtful speculation. *Maffei*, in his *Storia della Letteratura Italiana*, remarks, that *Baruffaldi*, in his life of the poet, and *Frizzi*, in his *Memorie storiche degli Ariosti*, relate that he was privately married to *Alessandra Benucci*, the widow of *Tito Strozzi*, and that the verses, on which I am commenting, relate to her.

36.

*Thyself shalt view
The truth, if thou in this fair vessel drink.*

Stanza cii. lines 5 and 6.

The story of the enchanted cup is to be found in romances and fables; but Ariosto was the first who spiced the draught, seasoning the story with that humour and good sense, which are so peculiarly his characteristics.

37.

For if thou wearest Cornwall's lofty crest.

Stanza ciii. line 2.

Che se porti il cimier di CORNOVAGLIA.

He calls it so either because Mark of Cornwall, the husband of Yseult, was more notorious as the "cuckold king" than his cotemporary Arthur, or (what is more probable) on account of the equivocal meaning of Cornovaglia.



END OF VOL. VII.

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